

GRIFFIN-SPALDING

Transit Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan

Prepared For:
The City of Griffin and Spalding County, GA
October 2014

Prepared By:

URS



TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Final Report

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GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

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Executive Summary

The City of Griffin and Spalding County undertook development of a Transit Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan in 2013 to evaluate the potential for providing new public transportation services within the City and County. This study is intended to support planning efforts for the City, County and regional planning partners in preparing for future growth, supporting mobility options, and contributing to economic development. For a number of years, the City and County have operated a limited rural public transit demand response service via contract with the Three Rivers Regional Commission. Prior area studies recommended a reexamination of the feasibility of implementing additional public transit services. The City and County undertook this study to determine the need, opportunities, and best approach to implementing new transit services.

The City of Griffin and Spalding County are growing areas within the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area. Spalding County contains approximately 200 square miles with over 64,000 residents of which 24,000 reside in the City of Griffin. As the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for regional transportation planning in the 18-county Atlanta region, which includes Spalding County, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) supported and participated in this study.

The Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility and Implementation Plan was conducted over a one year period from July 2013 through July 2014 and contained six major tasks:

- Public participation and local meetings
- Inventory of existing conditions
- Assessment of current and future needs
- Recommendations
- Transit system plan
- Implementation plan

Effectively gauging community interest for supporting public transportation is essential considering that the provision of transit service requires a significant community investment. Furthermore, implementation of service is easier to achieve if the community believes and supports that the investment adds value in multiple ways to the area. During the study, community input was solicited through public information workshops and meetings, a project website link, local media outreach, a Stakeholder Committee and stakeholder interviews.

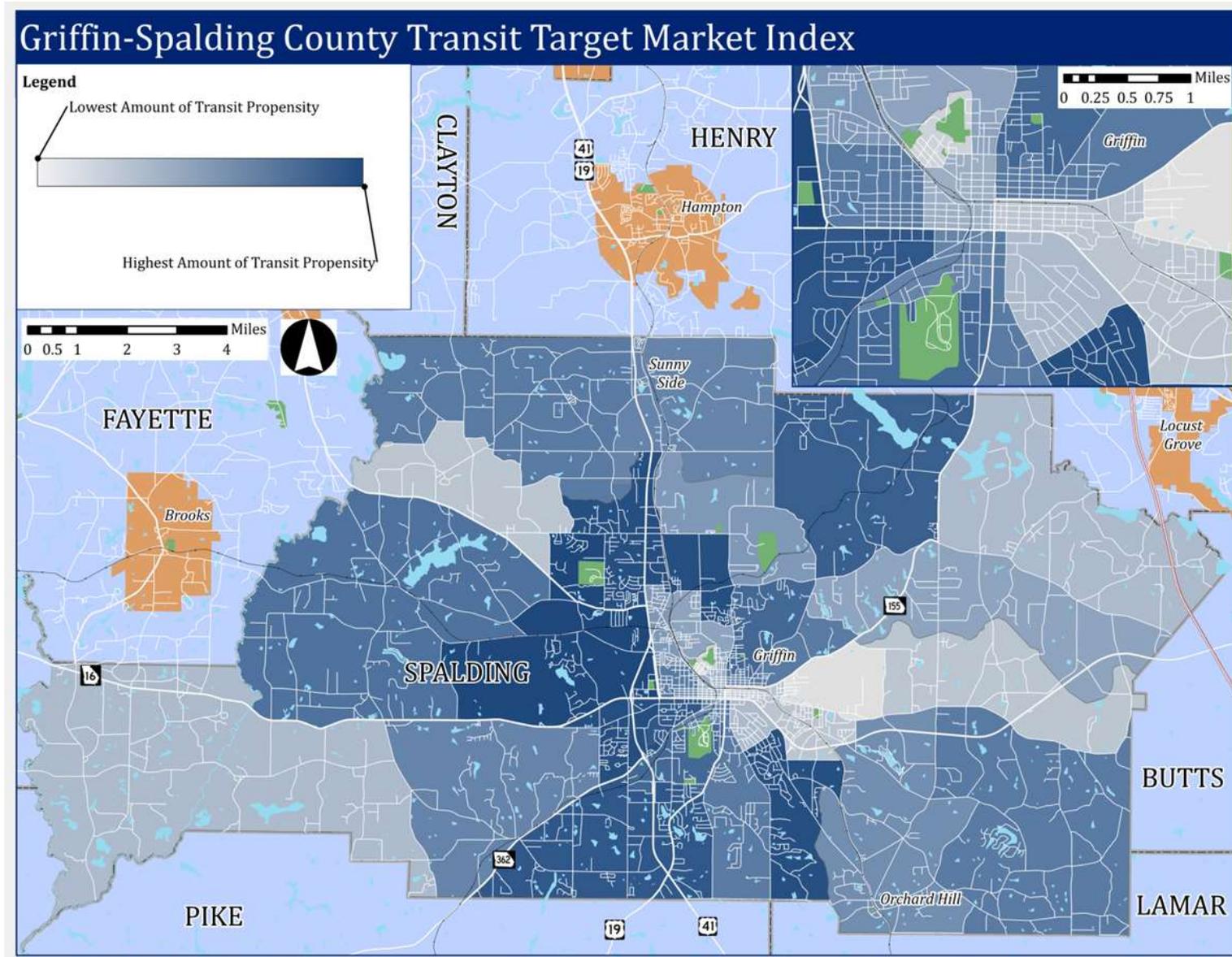
A variety of data were reviewed to determine the existing conditions and potential needs and demand for various types of transit service alternatives within Spalding County. Information types evaluated included:

- Prior plans and studies
- Population and employment densities, demographics, characteristics, and trends
- Land use patterns
- Travel patterns

In order to identify where the greatest propensity of transit target markets was located within the Griffin-Spalding area, a composite map (shown in Figure ES-1) and complementary scoring index were prepared showing combined demographic variables and the areas of relative demographic-based demand for transit service.

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Figure ES-1: Transit Target Market Index



Travel patterns were mapped and evaluated both from an internal county context and external to other areas. Land use analysis resulted in identification of activity centers and transit supportive sectors as well as area points of interest. Residential and employment density thresholds and their relationship to potential transit service types were developed and are presented in Figure ES-2.

Based on the information derived from the prior work, three of the most promising alternatives were identified:

- Georgia Commute Options program elements include incentives to lessen single occupancy vehicle use such as ridematching and guaranteed ride home
- Griffin-Spalding Flex Zone/Route Deviation System (shown in Figure ES-3) would operate within designated quadrants of the Griffin-Spalding service area. This service would offer the advantages of a fixed route system plus the convenience of curbside demand response service and would provide connections between major medical, educational, government, and shopping centers. A specific zone boundary and designated route would be established and residents or workers within the zone requiring curbside service would call a designated telephone number at least one hour prior to the desired trip.
- Griffin-Spalding Fixed Route system would consist of five proposed routes radiating outward from a centralized transfer center in downtown Griffin as shown in Figure ES-4. These routes were developed to link as many local origins and destinations as possible while keeping individual route lengths and running times reasonable. Service would operate on a 60-minute frequency, require five operating buses with two spare units, and as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), also contain complementary paratransit service for eligible persons with disabilities.

Figure ES-2: Transit Threshold Densities

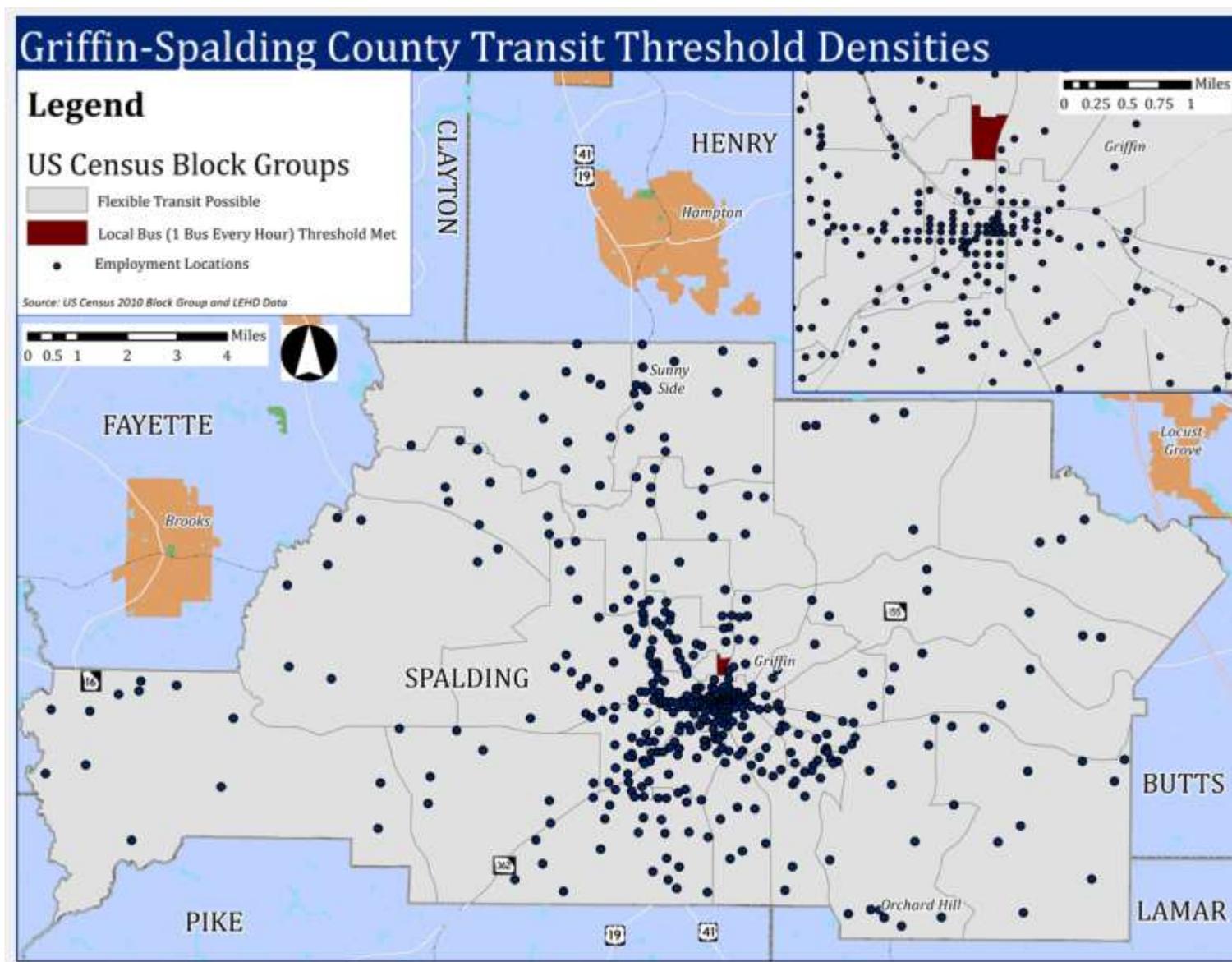


Figure ES-3: Potential Flex Zone/Fixed Route Alignments

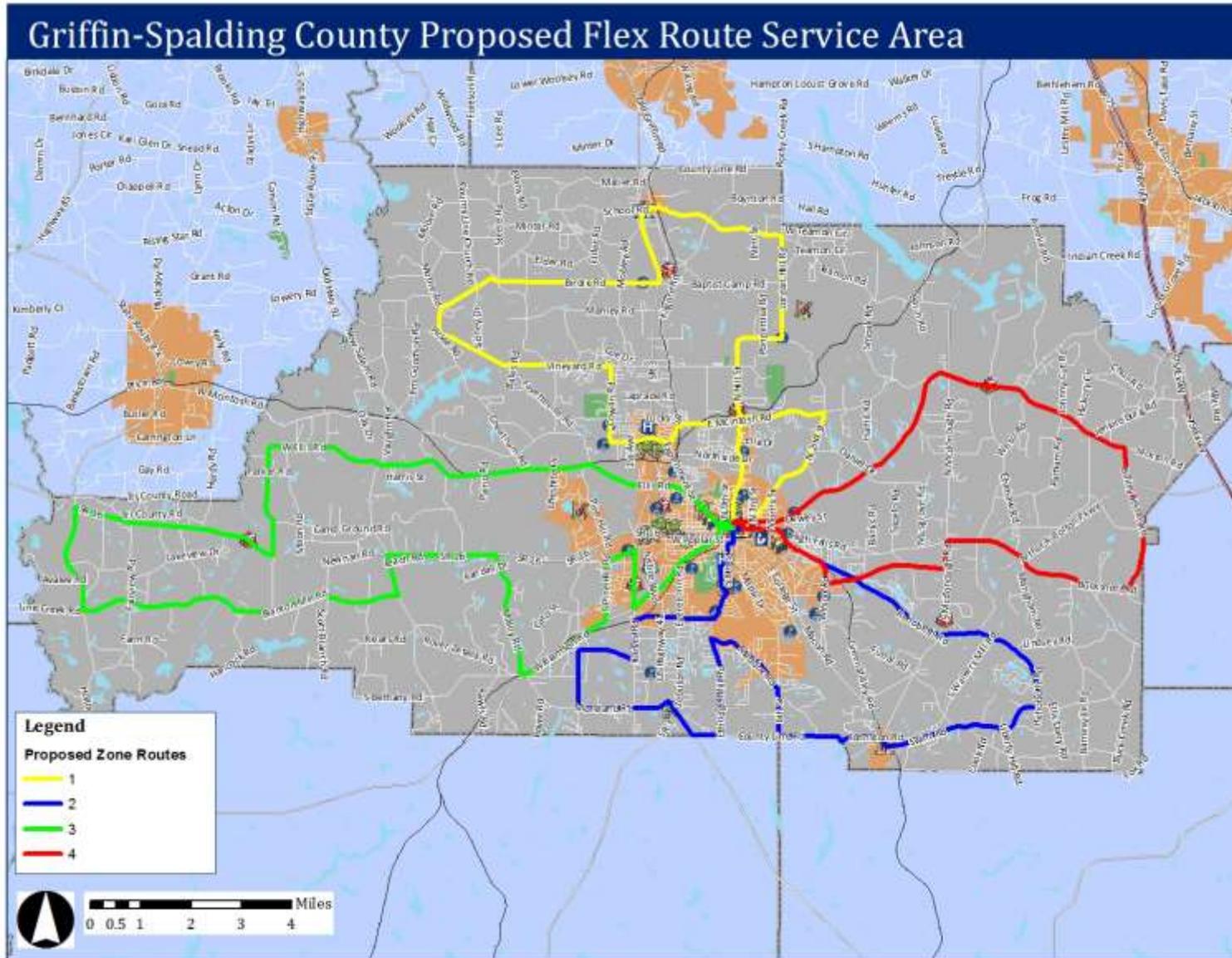
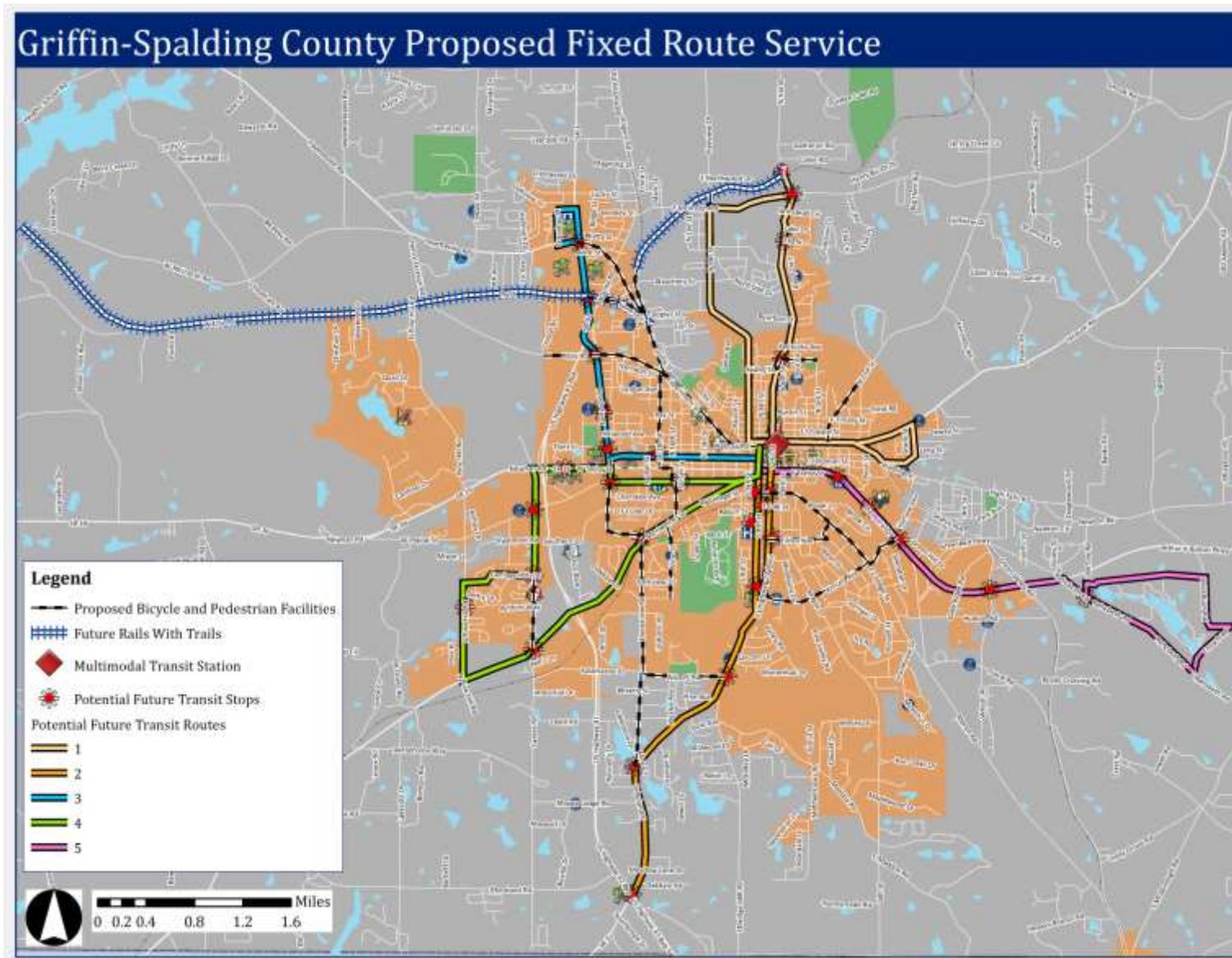


Figure ES-4: Potential Fixed Route Alignments



The recommended approach to implementing transit service for Griffin-Spalding is to proceed initially with the Flex Service and then implement the fixed route system through a five year phasing process. A detailed implementation plan was prepared to address vehicle type, operating issues, staffing, and other relevant items. Planning level estimates projecting finance and funding information were developed for capital and operating parameters as shown in the following tables.

Table ES-1: Transit Program Operating Projection (Assuming CMAQ as Funding Source)

Year	Program Elements	Est. Annual Riderhip ¹	Operating Cost ²	Average Fare (Est.)	Fare Revenue	Total Subsidy	Federal Share ³	State Share	Local Share
1	Administration	-	\$60,000	-	-	\$60,000	\$30,000	-	\$30,000
	Total	-	\$60,000	-	-	\$60,000	\$30,000	-	\$30,000
2	Administration	-	\$61,800	-	-	\$61,800	\$30,900	-	\$30,900
	Flex Service	20,400	\$122,400	\$2.00	\$40,800	\$81,600	\$65,280	-	\$16,320
	Total	20,400	\$184,200	-	-	\$143,400	\$96,180	-	\$71,700
3	Administration	-	\$63,654	-	-	\$63,654	\$31,827	-	\$31,827
	Fixed Route	91,800	\$612,000	\$1.00	\$91,800	\$520,200	\$416,160	-	\$104,040
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	21,420	\$126,072	\$2.00	\$42,840	\$83,232	\$66,586	-	\$16,646
	Total	113,220	\$801,726	-	\$134,640	\$667,086	\$514,573	-	\$152,513
4	Administration	-	\$65,564	-	-	\$65,564	\$32,782	-	\$32,782
	Fixed Route	96,390	\$630,360	\$1.00	\$96,390	\$533,970	\$427,176	-	\$106,794
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	22,491	\$129,854	\$2.00	\$44,982	\$84,872	\$67,898	-	\$16,974
	Total	118,881	\$825,778	-	\$141,372	\$684,406	\$527,856	-	\$156,550
5	Administration	-	\$67,531	-	-	\$67,531	\$33,766	-	\$33,766
	Fixed Route	101,210	\$649,271	\$1.00	\$101,210	\$548,061	\$438,449	-	\$109,612
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	23,616	\$133,750	\$2.00	\$47,232	\$86,518	\$69,214	-	\$17,304
	Total	124,826	\$850,552	-	\$148,442	\$702,110	\$541,429	-	\$160,681
6	Administration	-	\$69,557	-	-	\$69,557	\$34,779	-	\$34,779
	Fixed Route	116,392	\$668,749	\$1.00	\$116,392	\$552,357	\$276,179	-	\$276,179
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	24,797	\$137,763	\$2.00	\$49,594	\$88,169	\$70,535	-	\$17,634
	Total	141,189	\$876,069	-	\$165,986	\$710,083	\$381,492	-	\$328,591
7	Administration	-	\$71,644	-	-	\$71,644	\$35,822	-	\$35,822
	Fixed Route	122,212	\$688,811	\$1.00	\$122,212	\$566,599	\$283,300	-	\$283,300
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	26,037	\$141,896	\$2.00	\$52,074	\$89,822	\$71,858	-	\$17,964
	Total	148,249	\$902,351	-	\$174,286	\$728,065	\$390,979	-	\$337,086

1. Ridership estimate assumes 9 passengers per hour and annual increase of 5%

2. Operating Cost assumes \$60.00 per revenue hour and includes estimated 3% CPI annual increase

3. Federal contribution under CMAQ Program is 80% of operating costs and remainder local.

Table ES-2 displays the Transit Program Capital Projection utilizing 5307 funding parameters for the seven-year period, including estimated vehicle, passenger amenities, and office/computer equipment and subsidy funding requirements.

Table ES-2: Transit Program Capital Projection (Assuming 5307 as Funding Source)

Capital Facility Improvement Cost Estimates					
Type	Units	Estimated Unit Cost	Total	Federal Share (80%)	Local Share (20%)
Transit Vehicles	7	\$110,000	\$770,000	\$616,000	\$154,000
Support Vehicle	1	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$24,000	\$6,000
Transit Center	1	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$240,000	\$60,000
Shelters	10	\$6,000	\$60,000	\$48,000	\$12,000
Bus Stops	50	\$250	\$12,500	\$10,000	\$2,500
Software/Hardware	-	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$16,000	\$4,000
Office Equipment	-	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$12,000	\$3,000
Totals			\$1,207,500	\$966,000	\$241,500

Note: Any cost and/or quantity opinions, estimates or forecasts provided by the URS was on a basis of experience and judgment, but since URS has no control over market conditions or bidding procedures, URS cannot and does not warrant that bids, ultimate construction cost, or project economics will not vary from such opinions, estimates or forecasts

Based on the Transit Program Operating and Capital projections, CMAQ funding should be considered for the first three years of fixed route operation and 5307 funds for capital equipment and facility requirements. This would be dependent upon Griffin-Spalding applying for and being approved for this funding. Once the three year limit for CMAQ funding expired, the transit system should utilize Section 5307 funding for operations.

1.0 Introduction

Spalding County and the City of Griffin initiated development of a transit feasibility study in July 2013. The purpose of the study was to identify the potential for public transportation services within Spalding County and the City of Griffin to improve local mobility, reduce air pollution, and contribute to the area's economic development. Development of the study was directed by the planning department, with active participation from community leaders and stakeholders through the Griffin-Spalding Area Transportation Committee (GSATC). General public input was garnered through public information meetings, an online survey, and a study website. URS Corporation assisted Griffin-Spalding in conducting the Transit Feasibility Study.

Very few motorized transportation options currently exist within the city other than private vehicles. Access to private transportation services is limited, with a handful of private taxi or special needs transportation services. Limited public transit service is currently operating in Spalding County. The Three Rivers Regional Commission (TRRC) operates a regional public transportation service in Butts, Lamar, Pike, Spalding, and Upson Counties. The regional public transportation program is administered by the TRRC on behalf of the member governments, and was the first regional rural/suburban public transit service area established within the state. The regional public transportation program operates under a demand response model which means that there are no fixed routes, bus stops, or pick up times. With a demand response model residents call in and order a trip 24 hours in advance, and daily routes are generated based on the destinations requested.

1.1 Study Scope and Schedule

The Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study was conducted during a one-year period from July 2013 through July 2014. An initial task for the study was to identify and document existing conditions and community needs, which were reported in the Existing Conditions Technical Memorandum. All elements of the study incorporated input from public and stakeholder involvement. Elements of the community outreach approach included meetings with a Griffin-Spalding Area Transportation Committee, stakeholder interviews, a community survey, an online survey, and public information meetings.

2.0 Community Characteristics

2.1 Existing Area Plans and Studies

One component of examining the existing conditions was collecting information on programmed, planned, and desired projects. Having knowledge of previously planned projects is essential for properly assessing a community's identified needs and matching these needs with potential transit strategies. A number of local and regional studies have been conducted in the recent past that may have application, in regards to identifying issues, needs, and policies, strategies or projects. The area plans and studies are summarized in Appendix A.

2.2 Socioeconomic and Demographic Characteristics

Understanding community characteristics such as socioeconomics and demographics as well as land use and development patterns is an important element of determining potential transit needs within a community. A useful source of community information is the decennial Census and the American Community Survey (ACS), undertaken by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau. It is important to note that the most currently available data has been collected. One data caveat is that much of the data released by the Census Bureau is based on a statistical sampling process, including all data on commute patterns and travel behavior. The Georgia Department of Labor is the source for economic data. Demographic data is shown for Census base year 2010. The Census Bureau only reports more recent ACS data for places having 65,000 or more in population.

2.2.1 Population Trends

Significant factors for determining transit needs are total population and population concentration or density. Highly concentrated urban areas have different transit needs than sparsely populated rural areas, and the types of transit modes available to meet those needs vary based on the need.

Spalding County and the City of Griffin are located on the southern periphery of the Atlanta region. Recent population trends for the City of Griffin and Spalding County are shown in Table 2-1. From 1960 to 2010, Griffin’s population increased 9 percent, adding 1,908 persons. Over the same period, Spalding County grew by 81 percent, adding 28,669 persons. Griffin represented 61 percent of the county’s population in 1960; however, the share of Griffin’s population dropped to 37 percent by 2010.

Table 2-1: Total Population – 1960 through 2010

Year	Griffin		Spalding County	
	Total Population	Percent Change from Previous Decade	Total Population	Percent Change from Previous Decade
1960	21,735		35,404	
1970	22,734	4.6%	39,514	11.6%
1980	20,728	-8.8%	47,899	21.2%
1990	21,347	3.0%	54,457	13.7%
2000	23,451	9.9%	58,417	7.3%
2010	23,643	0.8%	64,073	9.7%

Source: U.S. Census

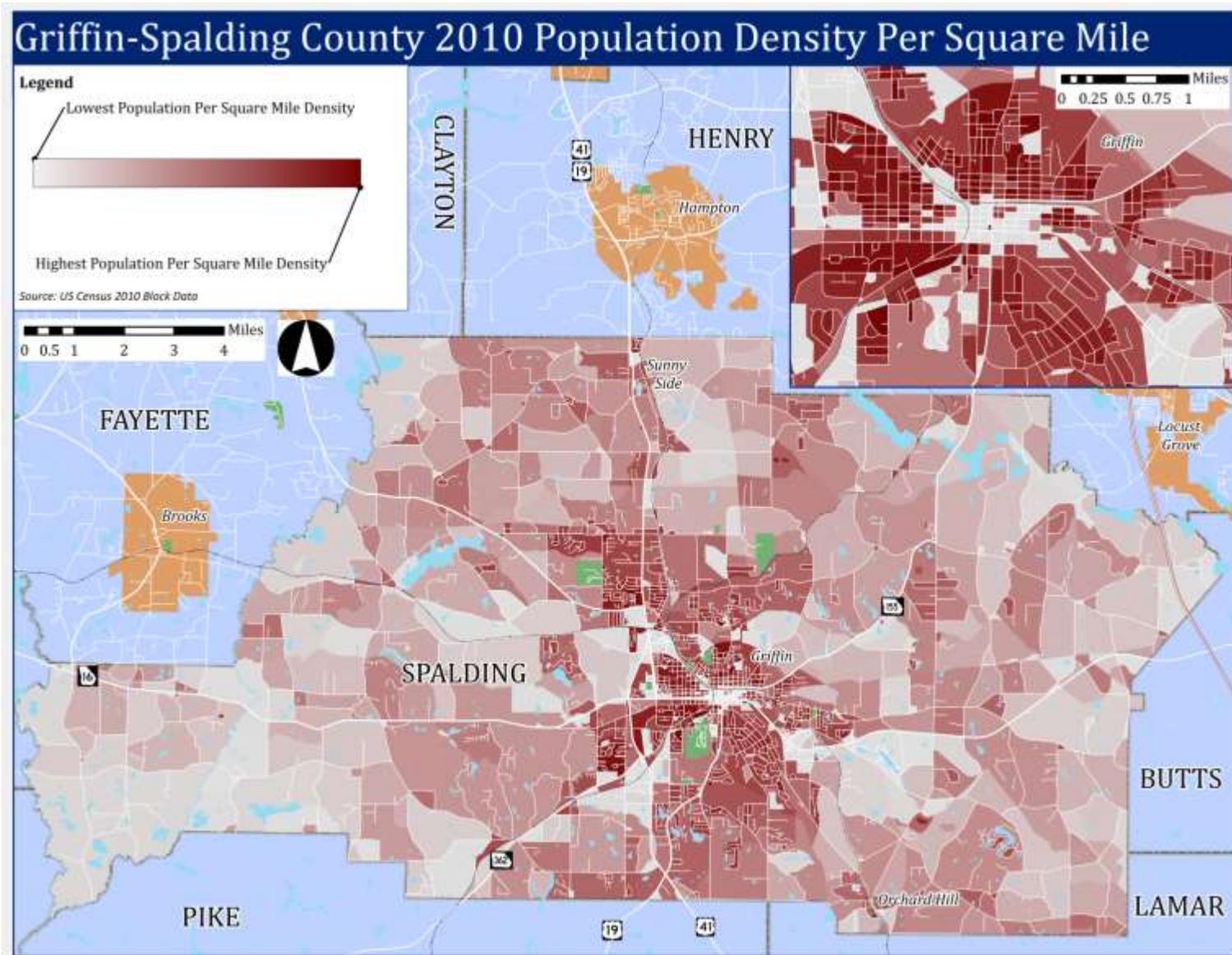
The distribution of population by Census block group is shown in Figure 2-1. Population density within Spalding County and the City of Griffin ranges from 2.06 persons per square mile to 39,882 persons per square mile. The greatest population concentrations are found in the area surrounding downtown Griffin.

2.2.2 Employment

Total employment within Spalding County is shown in Table 2-2 for 2012.

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Figure 2-1: Population Density – 2010



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Table 2-2: Total Employment in Spalding County – 2012

Industry	Number of Firms	Number of Employees
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	176	3,005
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	x
Construction	107	434
Manufacturing	63	2,539
Utilities	0	x
Wholesale Trade	62	663
Retail Trade	215	2,494
Transportation and Warehousing	31	325
Information	13	122
Finance and Insurance	71	457
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	55	209
Management of Companies and Enterprises	87	409
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	4	x
Educational Services	62	1,701
Health Care and Social Assistance	11	99
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	128	4,176
Accommodation and Food Services	15	149
Other Services (except Public Administration)	110	1,854
Government	87	4,480
Total	1,278	20,668
x – Denotes confidential data relating to individual employers and cannot be released.		

2.2.3 Demographics

Reviewing demographic characteristics is helpful in transit planning because it can provide a better understanding of potential needs of different population groups and identify groups who may be underserved by the existing transportation system. Transit service can be used to increase accessibility and mobility for underserved groups. Persons who are more likely to need or use transit include low-income persons, minorities (non-white persons), youth, elderly, persons living in households without vehicles, and disabled persons.

Tables 2-3 through 2-5 show age, race, ethnicity, and income characteristics for the City of Griffin, compared to Spalding County and the state. Figures 2-2 through 2-6 show the distribution of each group across the city and where there are more concentrated populations of each group. The following observations are noted about the population of Griffin. Households in Spalding County and the City of Griffin have lower incomes and fewer vehicles per household than is found in the state. The median household income in Griffin was \$32,826, lower than Spalding County (\$41,163) or the state (\$49,736).

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Approximately one-quarter of Griffin residents are living in poverty. Nearly 15 percent of households lack a vehicle.

Table 2-3: Age and Race - 2010

Geography	Total Population	Population Age 10-19		Population Age 65+		Non-white Population	
		Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Griffin	23,643	3,325	14.1	2,945	12.5	13,522	57.2
Spalding County	64,073	8,963	14.0	8,539	13.3	23,925	37.3
Georgia	9,687,653	1,399,683	14.4	1,032,035	10.7	3,900,213	40.3

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2-4: Race and Ethnicity - 2010

Geography	One Race				Two or More Races	Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity
	White	Black or African American	Asian	Other Race		
Griffin	10,121	12,331	259	514	418	952
Spalding County	40,148	21,030	574	1,271	1,050	2,451
Georgia	5,787,440	2,950,453	314,467	427,822	207,489	853,689

Source: U.S. Census

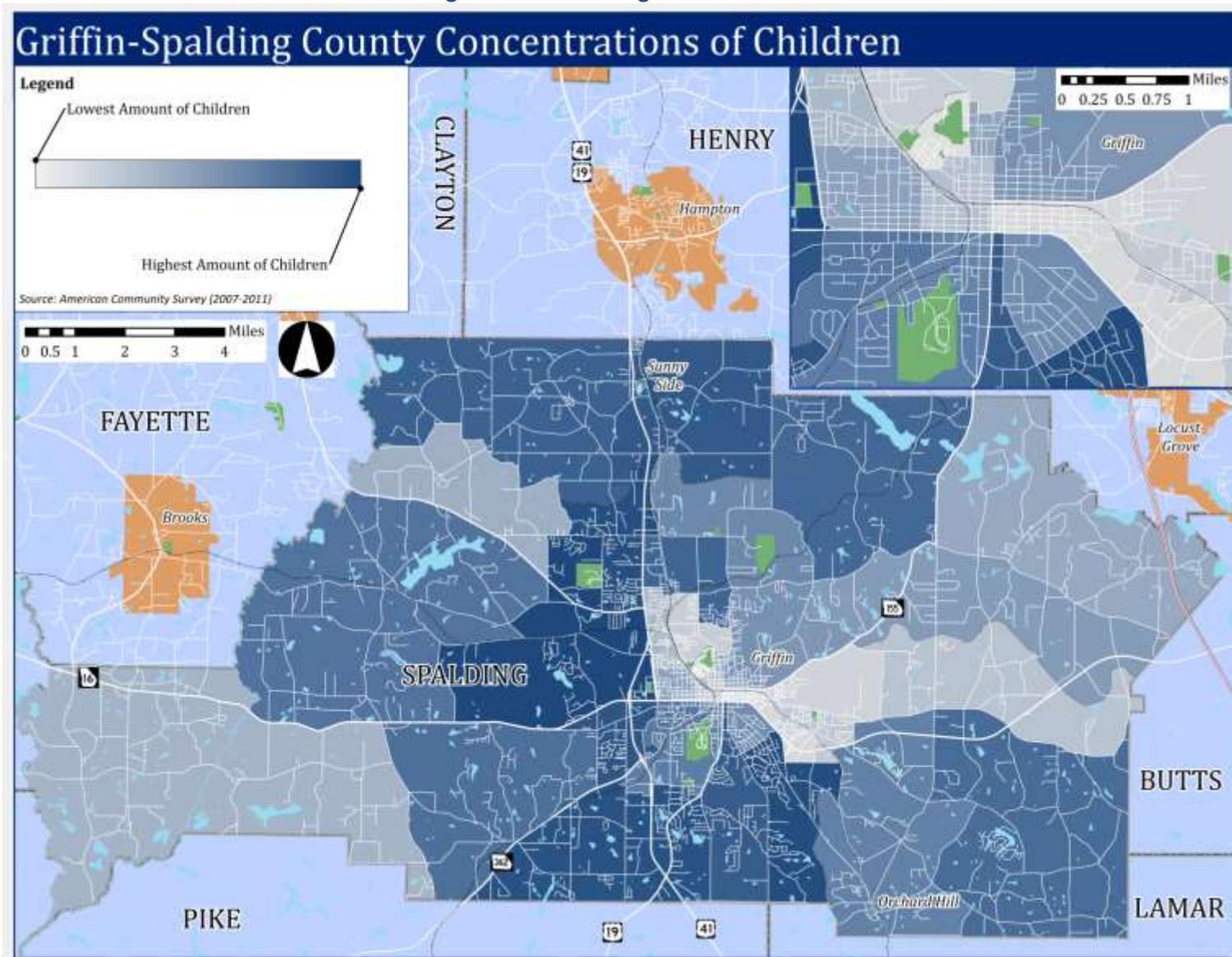
Table 2-5: Income and Vehicles Available - 2010

Geography	Median Household Income	Persons Living Below Poverty		Total Households	Households With No Vehicle Available	
		Total	Percent		Total	Percent
Griffin	32,826	6,572	27.8	8,557	1,246	14.6
Spalding County	41,163	13,391	20.9	22,519	1,817	8.1
Georgia	49,736	1,598,463	16.5	3,504,488	238,702	6.8

Source: U.S. Census

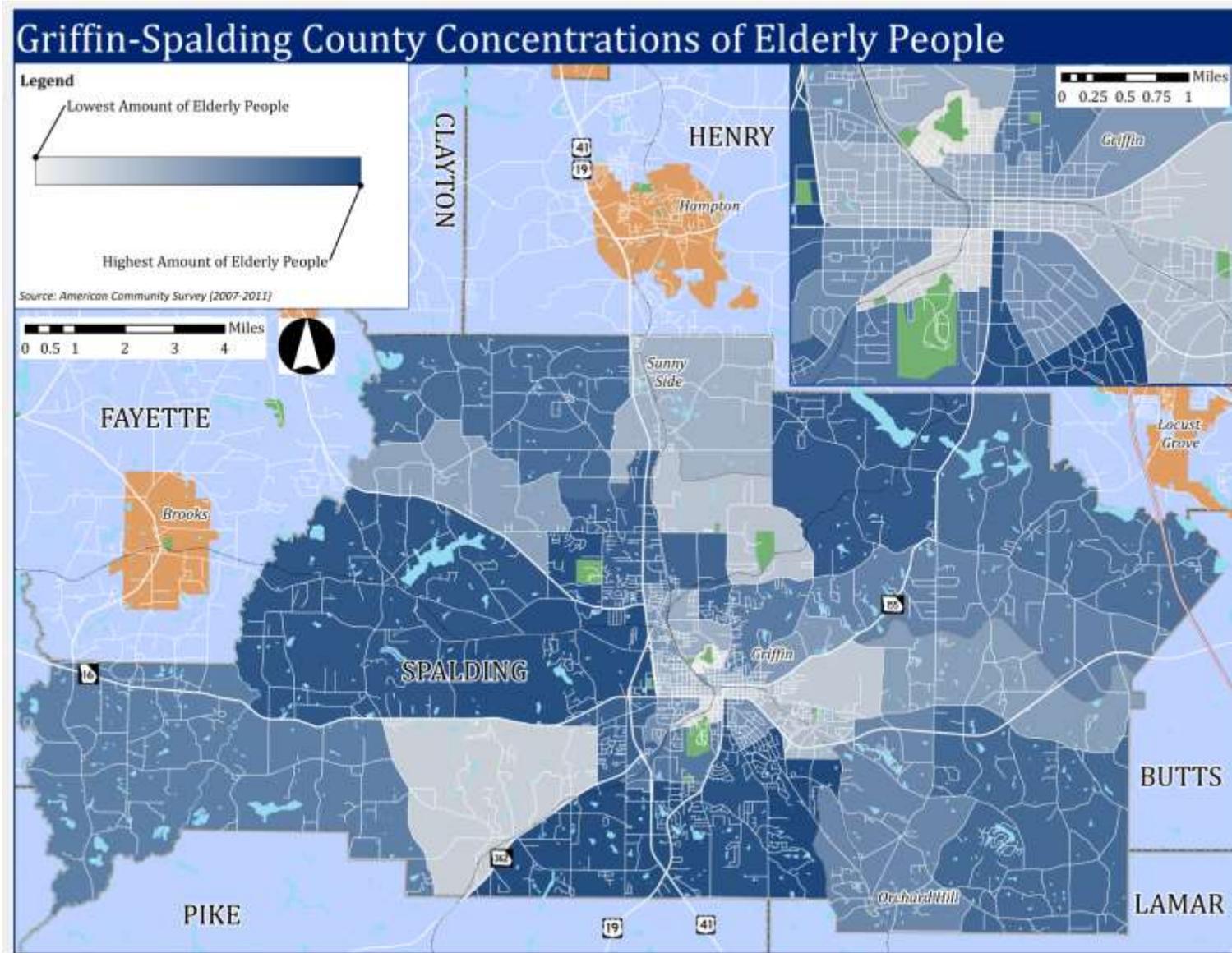
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Figure 2-2: Persons Age 10 to 19 – 2010



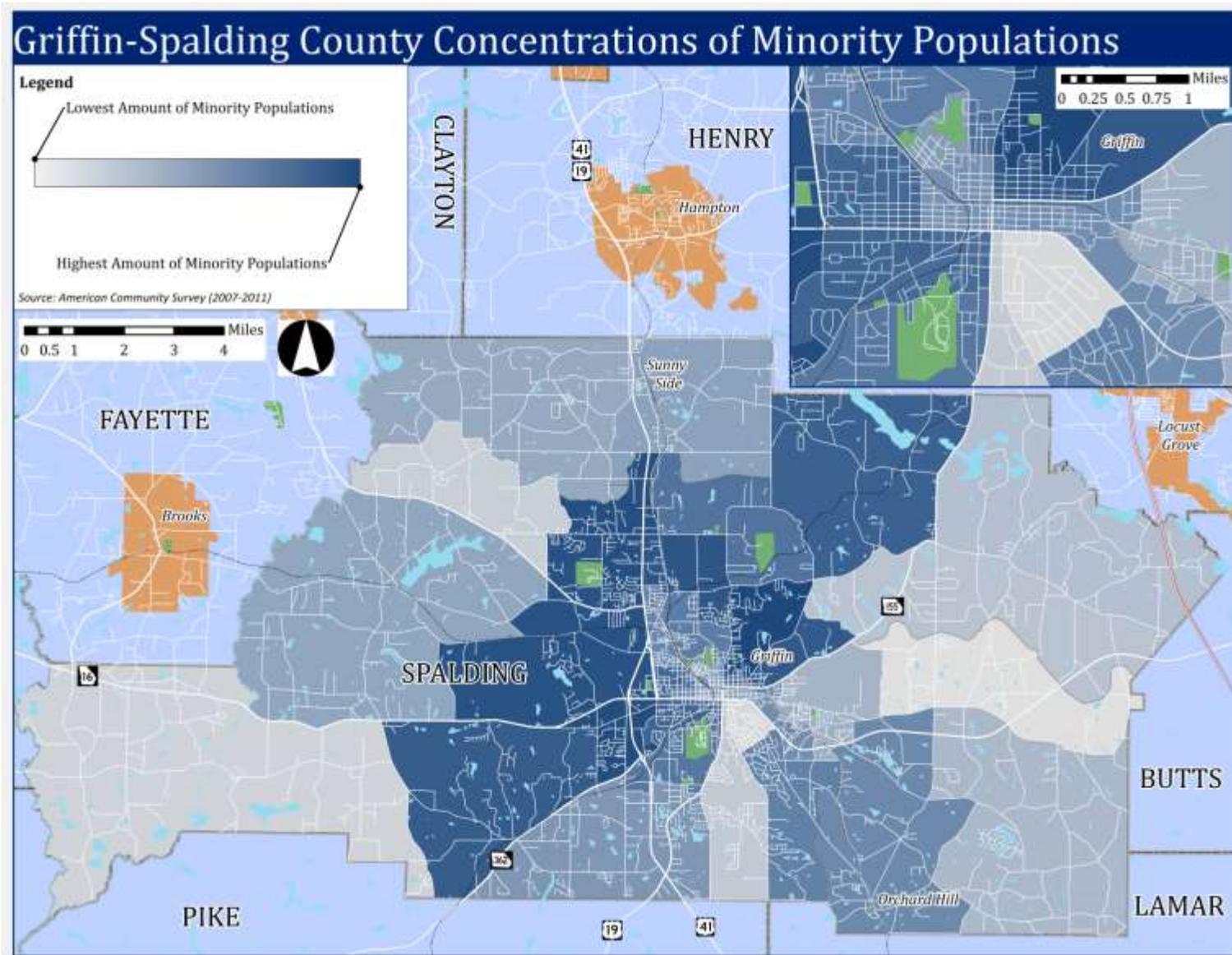
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Figure 2-3: Persons Age 65 or Older – 2010



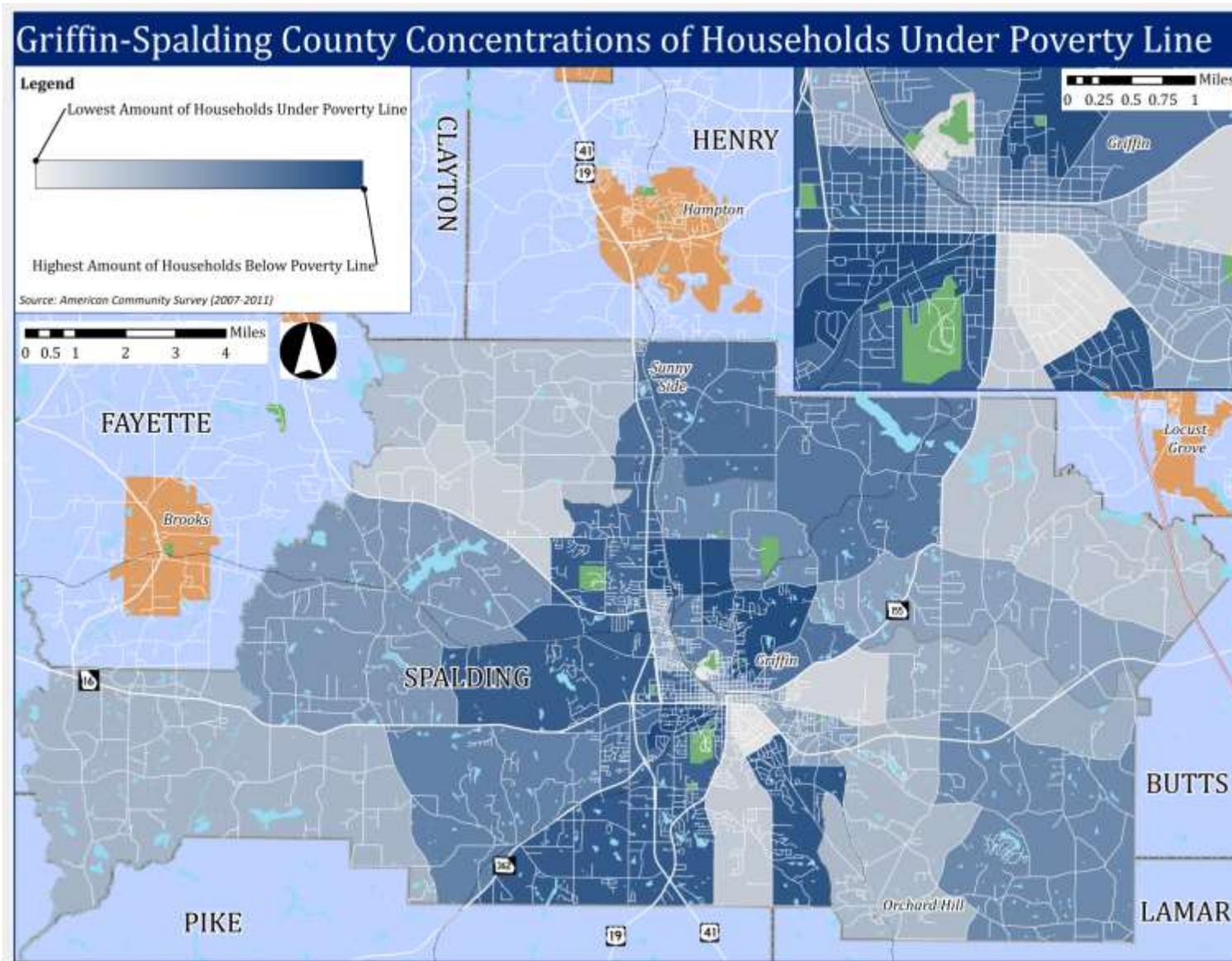
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Figure 2-4: Non-White Persons – 2010



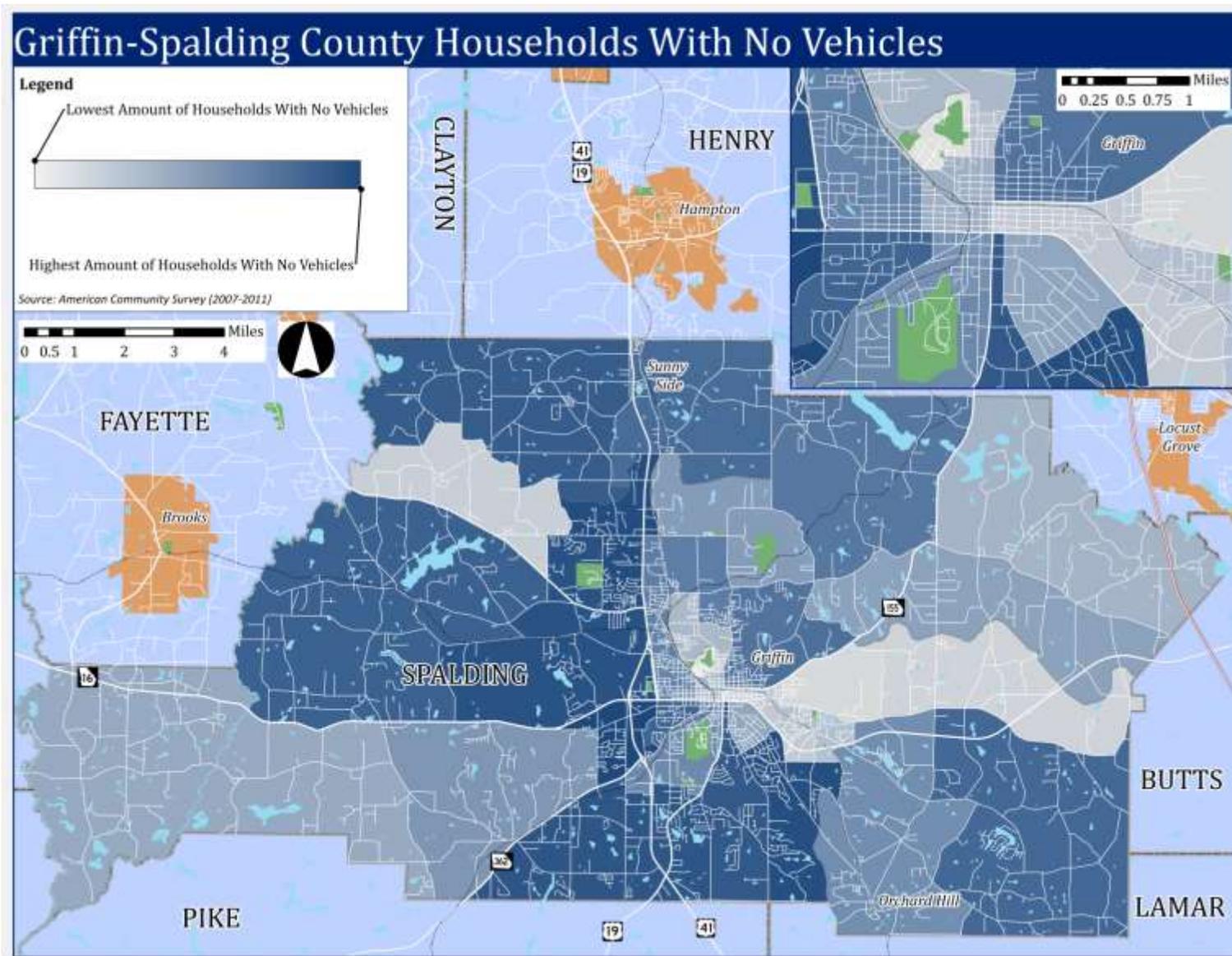
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Figure 2-5: Households Below Poverty Line – 2010



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Figure 2-6: Households with No Vehicle – 2010



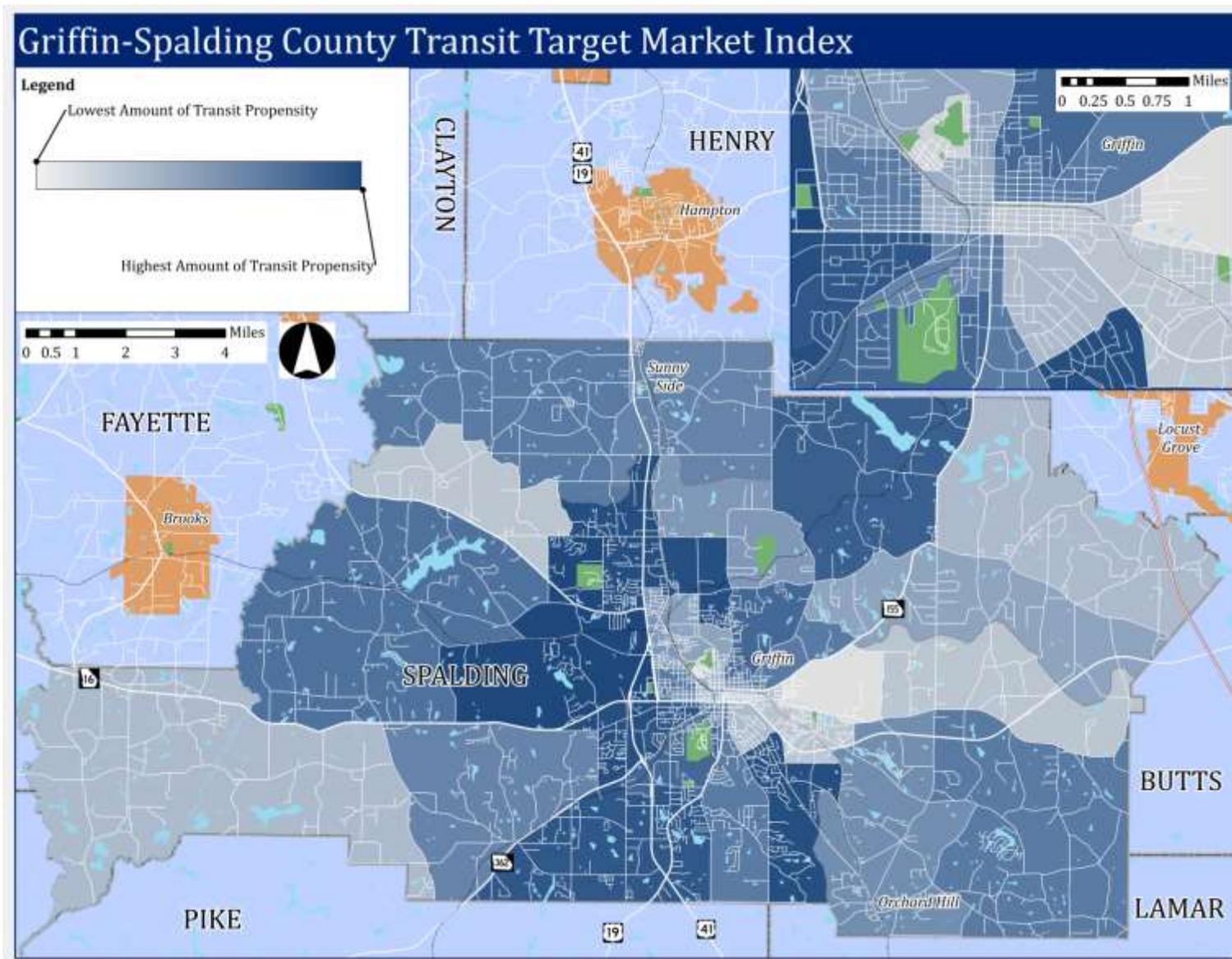
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In order to identify where the greatest propensity of transit target markets are located within the Griffin-Spalding area, a composite map was developed showing combined demographic variables. The composite target market index was developed considering density or concentrations of total population, low-income persons, minorities (non-white persons), youth, elderly, and persons living in households without vehicles within each Census block group. Each variable was ranked on a scale from one to four, with one having the least concentration (below the 25th percentile) and four having the greatest concentration (above the 75th percentile). The total score for the combined variables was calculated, and then ranked from least (below the 25th percentile) to greatest (above the 75th percentile). The result of the assessment is shown in Figure 2-7. This assessment provides a way to identify the greatest relative demographic-based demand for transit within Spalding County and the City of Griffin.

Another group within the community who may be more likely to need or use transit services is disabled persons. For some types of transit services, such as fixed route service, if federal funding is used, complementary paratransit service is required as specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). For human services transportation, identifying the potential needs of the disabled population also must be considered. Data regarding disabled populations can be reported using Census data. The categories reported include sensory, physical, mental, self-care, go-outside-home, and employment disabilities as shown in Table 2-6.

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Figure 2-7: Transit Target Market Index



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Table 2-6: Disability Type

	Georgia		Spalding County		Griffin	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Total disabilities tallied for people 16 to 64 years:	1,242,346		11,296		4,270	
Sensory disability	175,462	14.1%	1,408	12.5%	436	10.2%
Physical disability	455,966	36.7%	3,608	31.9%	1,271	29.8%
Mental disability	277,487	22.3%	3,012	26.7%	1,188	27.8%
Self-care disability	133,389	10.7%	1,093	9.7%	479	11.2%
Go-outside-home disability	200,042	16.1%	2,175	19.3%	896	21.0%

Source: U.S. Census

2.2.4 Travel Characteristics

Reviewing and understanding travel characteristics is an important component of a transit planning study. The U.S. Census Bureau collects data on commute travel, the most predictable type of trip conducted. The Census reports on a variety of commuter travel characteristics, including how commuters get to work, how long it takes, and where they are working. Table 2-7 provides a summary of the mode split for Spalding County and City of Griffin commuters and average travel time, as compared to the state. In general, persons living in Griffin appear to have shorter average commute times than those living in the county overall.

City of Griffin residents appear more likely to walk or use other means to get to work than was found countywide. The percent of persons driving alone to work was somewhat smaller for Griffin residents versus those living in the county (74.4 percent versus 79.1 percent) as was the share of those carpooling to work (18.2 percent versus 15.2 percent).

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Table 2-7: Means of Commute to Work - 2010

Geography	Total Workers Age 16+	Percent of Workers who:						Average Travel Time (Minutes)
		Drove Alone	Car-pooled	Used Public Transportation	Walked	Other	Worked at Home	
Griffin	8,684	74.4	18.2	0.5	2.5	2.6	1.6	25.7
Spalding County	24,786	79.1	15.2	0.5	1.3	2.0	1.9	28.3
Georgia	4,239,802	78.8	11.1	2.2	1.6	1.7	4.6	27.0

Note: Totals for means to work may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Census

To understand travel patterns, Census data at the county, city, and census tract level were reviewed. According to the U.S. Census, over 53 percent of persons living in Spalding County stay within Spalding County to work, as shown in Tables 2-8 and 2-9.

Table 2-8: Journey to Work – Where Spalding County Residents Work

Work County	Total Trips	Percent of Trips
Spalding County	13,733	53.4%
Henry County	2,798	10.9%
Fulton County	2,103	8.2%
Clayton County	1,939	7.5%
Fayette County	1,507	5.9%
Other	3,661	14.2%
Total	25,741	

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2-9: Journey to Work – Where Persons Working in Spalding County Live

County of Residence	Total Trips	Percent of Trips
Spalding County	13,733	58.4%
Pike County	2,052	8.7%
Lamar County	1,953	8.3%
Henry County	1,529	6.5%
Upson County	941	4.0%
Other	3,324	14.1%
Total	23,535	

Source: U.S. Census

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

To gain a better understanding of more detailed work-commute patterns, the census tracts that comprise Spalding County were reviewed. Table 2-10 shows the cross-tabulation of census tracts within the county of where residents work within the county. The data show that the predominant commuter trip patterns occurred in the southern half of Spalding County with the majority of commute trips attracted to Tract 1612. Intra-county commute patterns are shown in Figure 2-8.

Table 2-10: Cross-tabulation of Residence-Work Trips in Spalding County by Census Tract

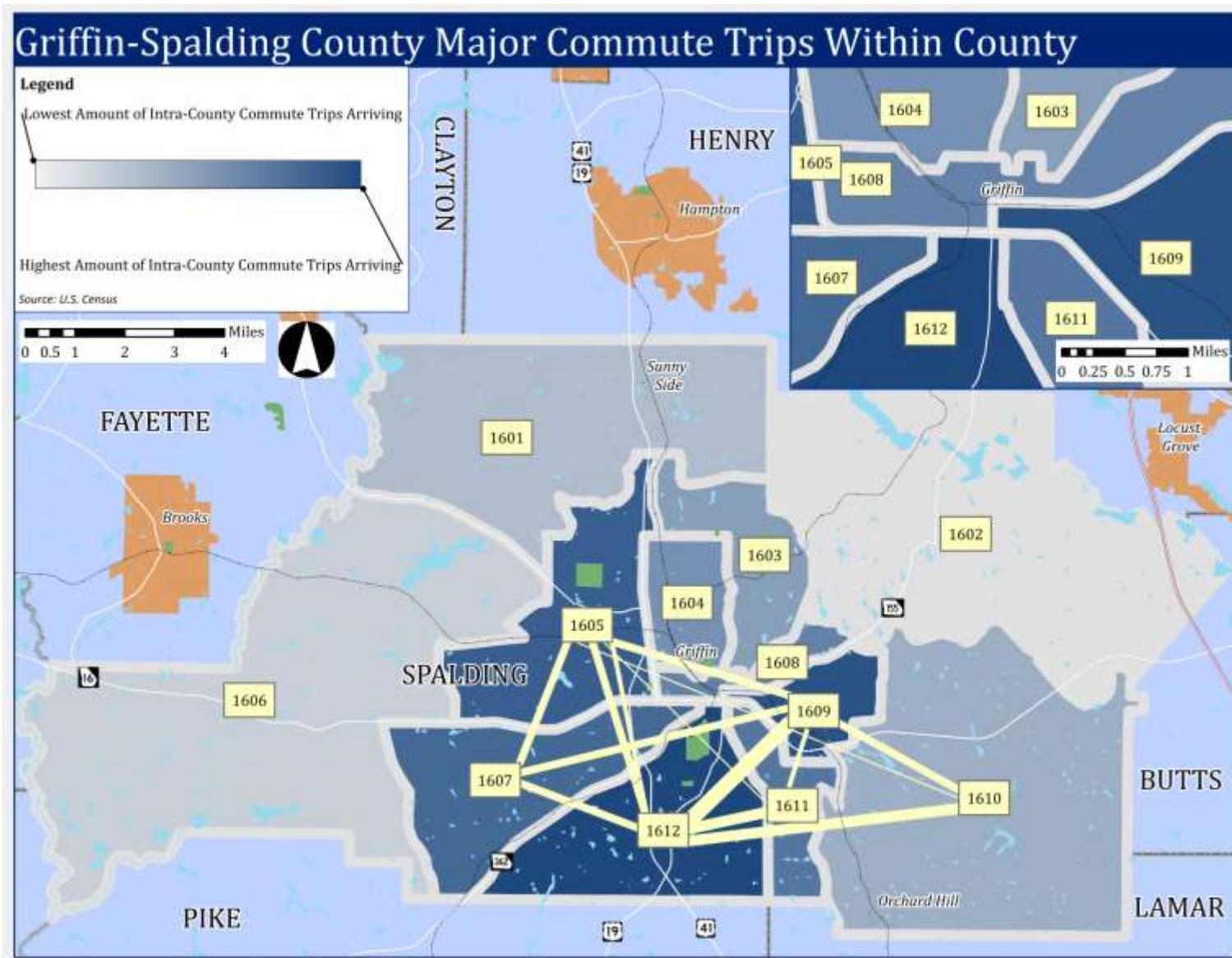
Residence Tract	Work Tract												Total
	1601	1602	1603	1604	1605	1606	1607	1608	1609	1610	1611	1612	
1601	56	11	3	5	9	19	8	3	0	6	8	10	138
1602	11	19	19	14	73	0	56	35	101	17	28	103	476
1603	3	1	24	25	58	0	60	29	90	14	30	79	413
1604	5	2	19	44	83	0	69	27	120	4	34	129	536
1605	9	2	20	21	188	4	124	55	162	12	45	141	783
1606	19	0	16	9	84	23	49	19	75	3	30	82	409
1607	8	0	17	27	155	3	111	38	148	15	41	163	726
1608	3	0	9	13	68	0	45	36	73	12	21	82	362
1609	0	2	1	14	47	0	43	23	98	3	14	82	327
1610	6	0	19	18	94	1	106	55	164	58	61	207	789
1611	8	1	19	5	97	0	74	52	121	19	71	192	659
1612	10	4	51	26	177	0	134	88	240	25	86	422	1263
Total	138	42	217	221	1,133	50	879	460	1,392	188	469	1,692	6,881

Source: U.S. Census

Overall, the greatest proportion of trips was destined for Henry County, followed by Clayton and Fayette Counties as shown in Figure 2-9.

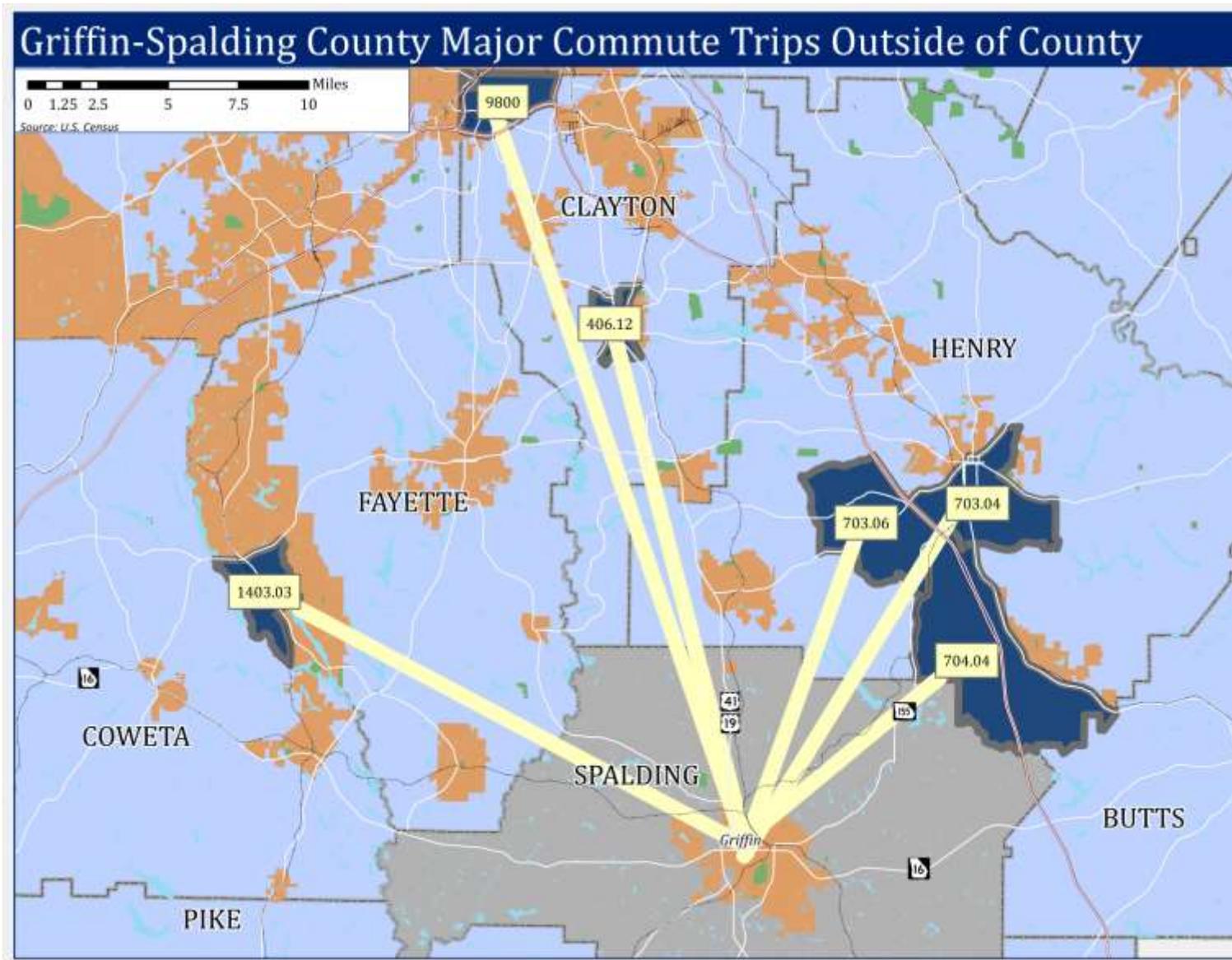
GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Figure 2-8: Intra-county Commute Patterns By Census Tract



GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Figure 2-9: Inter-county Commute Patterns By Census Tract



GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

2.3 Land Use and Development Characteristics

2.3.1 Land Use

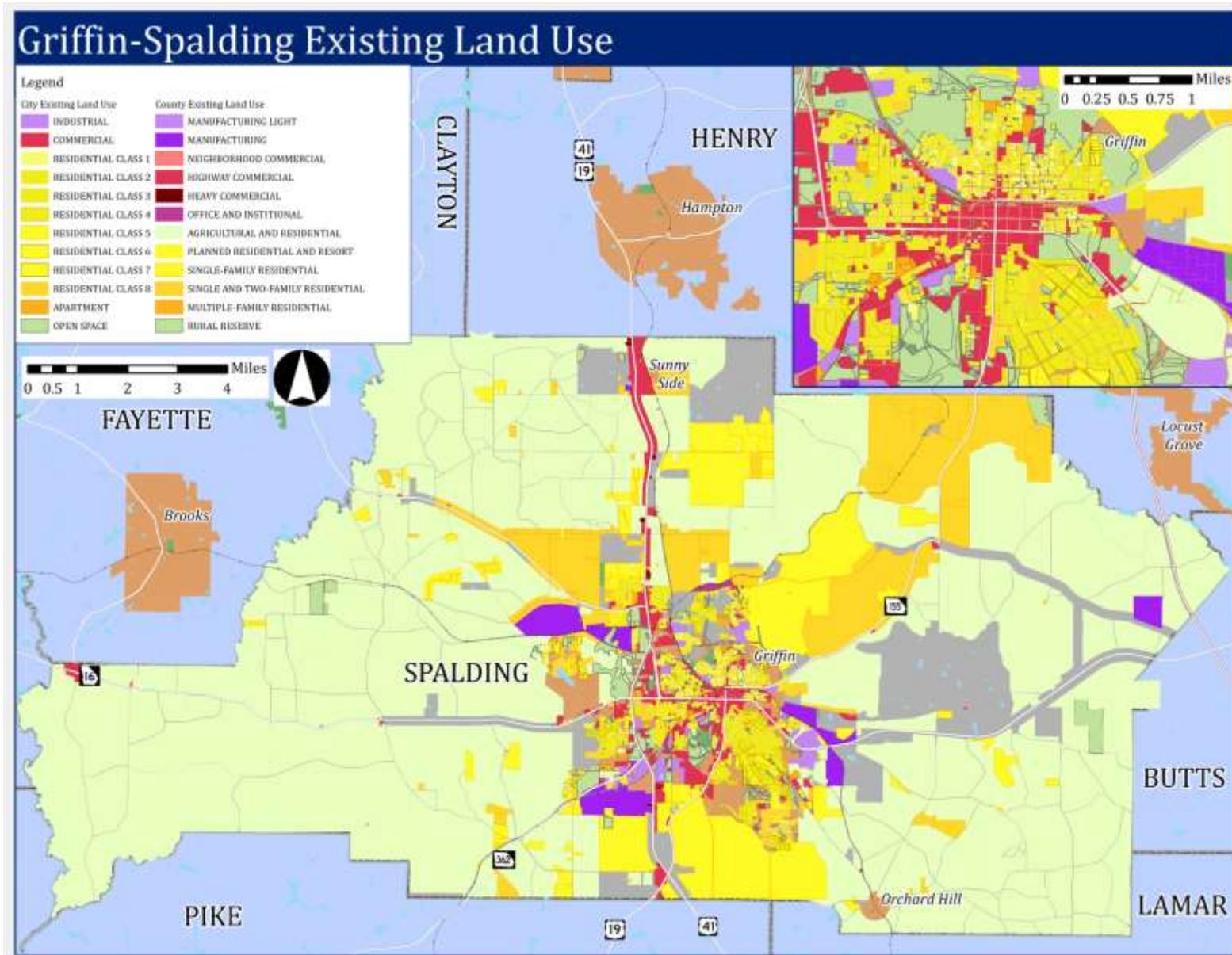
The existing land uses for Spalding County and the City of Griffin are shown in Table 2-11 and Figure 2-10.

Table 2-11: City of Griffin and Spalding County Existing Land Use

Land Use	Number of Acres	% of Total
<i>City of Griffin</i>		
Industrial	576	4.9%
Commercial	1207	10.2%
Residential Class 1	67	0.6%
Residential Class 2	506	4.3%
Residential Class 3	1197	10.1%
Residential Class 4	571	4.8%
Residential Class 5	308	2.6%
Residential Class 6	218	1.8%
Residential Class 7	123	1.0%
Residential Class 8	463	3.9%
Apartment	174	1.5%
Open Space	179	1.5%
Other Or Undeveloped	6220	52.7%
Total	11809	
<i>Spalding County</i>		
Manufacturing Light	1	0.0%
Manufacturing	1803	1.5%
Neighborhood Commercial	7	0.0%
Highway Commercial	717	0.6%
Heavy Commercial	61	0.1%
Office and Institutional	70	0.1%
Agricultural and Residential	82030	70.5%
Planned Residential and Resort	144	0.1%
Single-Family Residential	10128	8.7%
Single and Two Family-Residential	9711	8.3%
Multiple-Family Residential	30	0.0%
Rural Reserve	618	0.5%
Other Or Undeveloped	11014	9.5%
Total	116334	

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Figure 2-10: Existing Land Use



GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

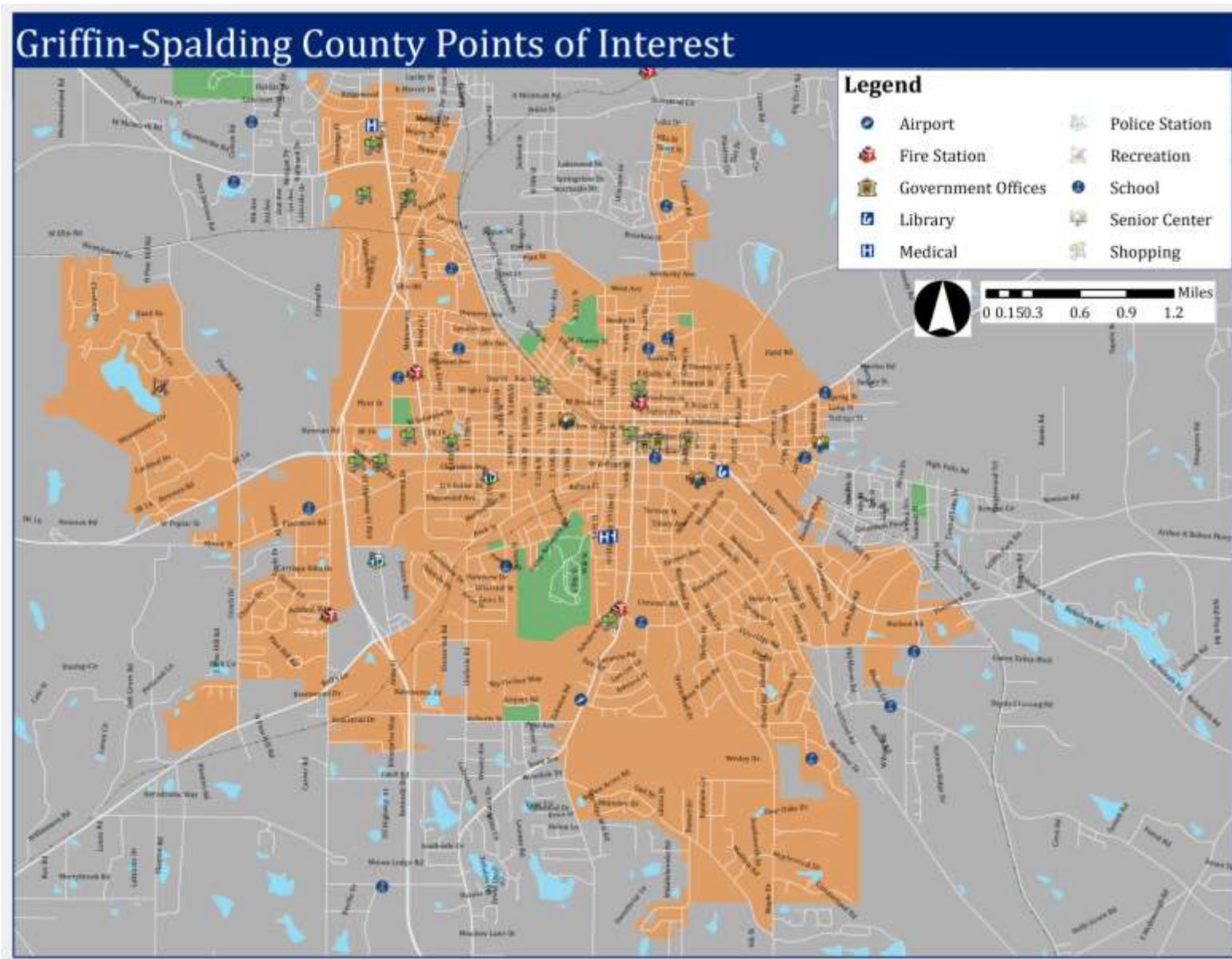
The majority of land area utilized throughout the county is indicated as ‘Agricultural and Residential’ and is characterized by low density development that is typically not supportive of transit. However, the central core of the County surrounding and including the City of Griffin is much more developed with a variety of residential densities, a commercial core, highway commercial development along US 41, and pockets of industrial based land use on the fringe of development. Additionally, there is a trend of residential development extending northeast from Griffin along the SR 155 corridor towards I-75 and Henry County. Table 2-12 indicates the land uses based on their possibility of being transit supportive and is further supported by the points of interest within Griffin and Spalding County shown on Figure 2-11.

Table 2-12: Transit-Supportive Land Use Areas

Land Use	Number of Acres	Possibility of Being Transit Supportive
<i>City of Griffin</i>		
Industrial	576	✓
Commercial	1207	✓
Residential Class 1	67	
Residential Class 2	506	
Residential Class 3	1197	
Residential Class 4	571	
Residential Class 5	308	
Residential Class 6	218	
Residential Class 7	123	
Residential Class 8	463	
Apartment	174	✓
Open Space	179	
Other Or Undeveloped	6220	
Total	11809	
<i>Spalding County</i>		
Manufacturing Light	1	
Manufacturing	1803	✓
Neighborhood Commercial	7	
Highway Commercial	717	✓
Heavy Commercial	61	✓
Office and Institutional	70	✓
Agricultural and Residential	82030	
Planned Residential and Resort	144	
Single-Family Residential	10128	
Single and Two Family-Residential	9711	✓
Multiple-Family Residential	30	✓
Rural Reserve	618	
Other Or Undeveloped	11014	
Total	116334	

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Figure 2-11: Major Trip Origins and Destinations in Griffin-Spalding



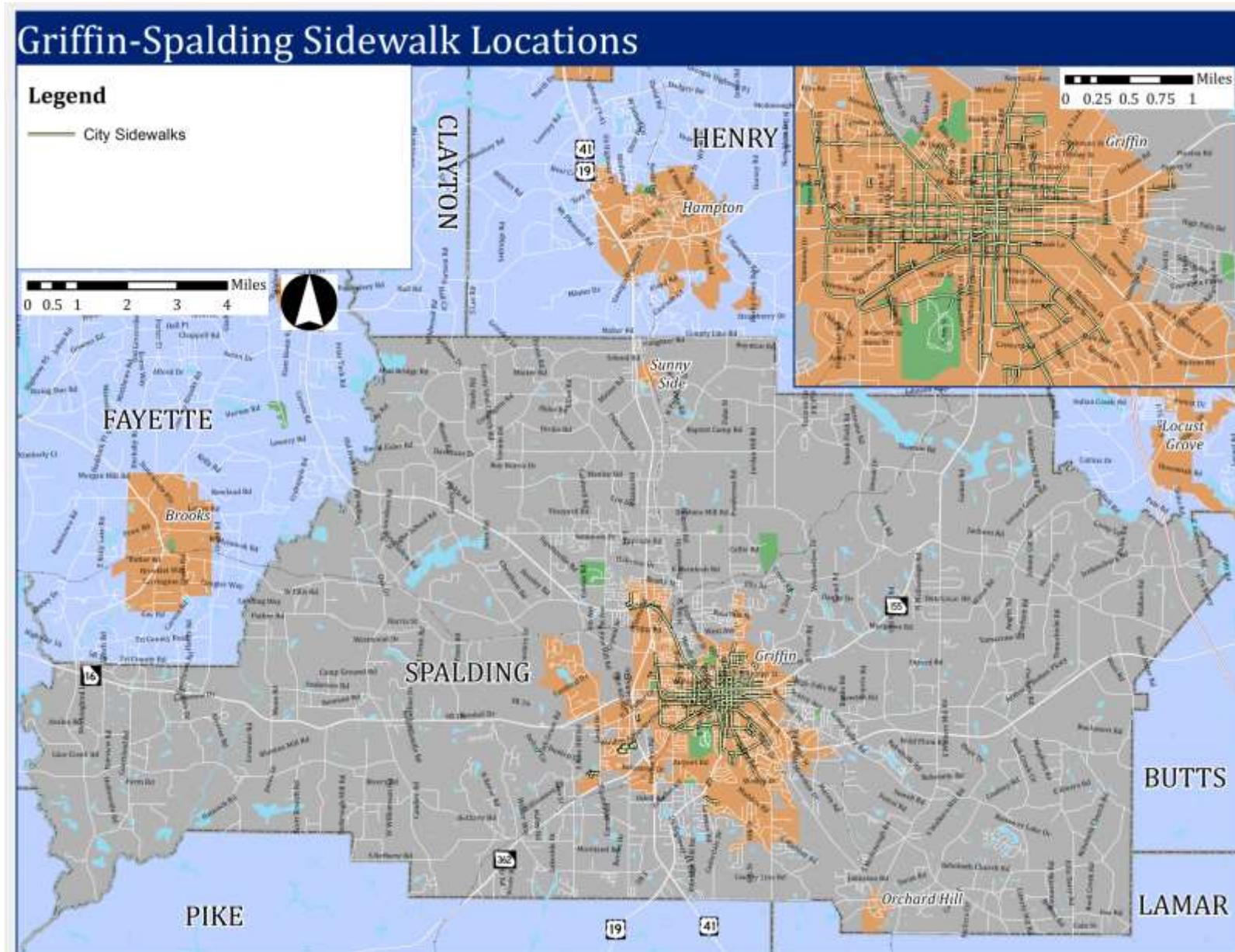
2.3.2 Pedestrian Facilities

In addition to the roadway network, one of the most important features for supporting transit services is the pedestrian facility network. Nearly every trip on transit begins or ends with a walking trip. In consideration of transit access, walking distances up to one-half mile from a transit stop are reasonable. The availability, connectivity, and accessibility of sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities are important components of a transit system. Other pedestrian facilities include marked cross-walks, pedestrian signals, curb ramps, street lighting, street furniture, and signage.

Only sidewalks within the City of Griffin were inventoried, as shown in Figure 2-12. However, a review of aerial photography, windshield surveys, and general knowledge indicate that the majority of the remaining areas of the County do not include substantial sidewalk coverage, with the exception of the Sun City development in the northeast corner of the county.

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Figure 2-12: Inventoried Sidewalks in the City of Griffin



2.4 Existing Transportation Services

2.4.1 Three Rivers Regional Commission

The Three Rivers Regional Commission (TRRC) is a 10 county regional planning commission that covers West Central Georgia and includes Butts, Carroll, Coweta, Heard, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding, Troup, and Upson Counties.



The TRRC is a quasi-governmental regional planning organizations created and managed under Georgia law by their member local governments. The TRRC performs many functions, but essentially develops, promotes, and provides comprehensive planning and development services. The TRRC provides professional technical assistance to state and federal agencies as well as to local governments in advancing quality growth and development.

The regional public transportation program is administered by the TRRC on behalf of the member governments, and was the first regional rural/suburban public transit service area established within the state. The regional approach has proved to be a cost effective way to provide public transportation within the service area. Public transportation is used to assist people to obtain and retain employment, receive regular medical attention, provide access to job training, provide access to commercial zones, and quality of life enhancement purposes.

The regional public transportation program operates under a demand response system which means that there are no fixed routes, bus stops, or schedule times. With a demand response service residents call in and request a trip 24 hours in advance, and daily routes are generated based on the destinations requested. The current fee is \$2.00 per one way trip, and the service is offered Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

2.4.2 Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Programs

Spalding County has been designated through the federal Clean Air Act as in Particulate Matter 2.5¹ air quality nonattainment. Due to this status, the county is eligible for specific federal transportation funds under the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program. One of the region's partners in working to reduce air pollution is the Clean Air Campaign. The Clean Air Campaign works with individuals, communities, agencies, and employers reduce air pollution through numerous initiatives, including a commuter program that supports travel demand management (TDM) strategies, such as carpooling, vanpooling, teleworking, and transit to reduce trips, traffic congestion, and air pollution. There are 5 documented vans with points of origin that start in Spalding County and go to destinations in the metro Atlanta area. These destinations are Delta Airlines; Federal Aviation Administration; Turner Broadcasting; the Veteran's Administration in Decatur; and Horizon. The vans carry on average 7 to 10 passengers.

¹ Fine particle pollution or PM2.5 describes particulate matter that is 2.5 micrometers in diameter and smaller - 1/30th the diameter of a human hair.

2.4.3 Commuter Services

The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) operates weekday commuter express bus services (Xpress) during the morning and afternoon commute periods in 12 counties throughout the Atlanta Region. The route operating in the closest proximity to Griffin-Spalding County is Xpress Route 440. This route originates at the GRTA Xpress Park and Ride lot located in Hampton (Boothe's Crossing Shopping Center) 104 Woolsey Road, Hampton, GA 30228. Route 440 operates seven trips in the morning and afternoon peak periods between the Park and Ride lot and downtown Atlanta. Additionally, Route 440 stops at the Xpress Park and Ride lot in Jonesboro located at 8488 Tara Blvd. (U.S. 19 /41), Jonesboro, GA 30236.

2.4.4 Private Transportation Providers

A small number of privately-owned transportation operators provide transportation services in Griffin, including four taxi services and two medical transportation services. The service availability and cost varies by provider. According to a local telephone directory, the taxis operating in the city are Griffin Cab Co., Marcella Cab Co., McCord Taxi Service, and Ride On Time. Liberty Convalescent Transport Services and Guardian Medical Transport provide non-emergency medical transportation in Griffin and are available 24-hours per day, seven days a week. They provide service for ambulatory patients and those on a stretcher; however, their vehicles are not wheelchair accessible.

3.0 Community Input

Gauging community interest for supporting public transportation is essential. Providing public transportation requires a significant community investment, which is easier to achieve if the community believes and supports that the investment adds value to the community. For the Griffin-Spalding County Transit Feasibility Study, community input was solicited through public information meetings, a project website link, media outreach, a Stakeholder Committee, and stakeholder interviews. Each stakeholder and community involvement technique is conducted to reach a different segment of the population and provide a broad sampling of public input. The following sections summarize input received during the existing conditions and needs task.

3.1 Public Information Meetings and Workshops

The first public information meeting and workshop for the Study was conducted on November 12, 2013 at the Spalding County Annex, Meeting Room 108. Meeting participants were presented findings from the existing conditions evaluation. The study team engaged the participants in a discussion about the need for public transportation in the Griffin-Spalding area and during the workshop discussed potential markets, service options, and challenges. Populations identified for transportation services included low-to-moderate-income residents and workers, senior citizens, commuters, and students.

A Public Outreach Event was conducted on January 3, 2014 in the Customer Service Lobby of Griffin City Hall. The URS Team greeted people as they came in to pay their bills. The meeting was an open house setting where customers could discuss the Transit Feasibility Study. During the course of the outreach event, over 200 project fact sheets were distributed and over 50 transit surveys were completed.

The second public information meeting and workshop was held on February 20, 2014 after two weather related cancellations. The meeting combined an open house setting where attendees were encouraged to review a study area map displaying major commute trips within and outside of the county. The open house period was followed by a presentation by the project consultant team and then a workshop involving an interactive mapping exercise. A summary of each public meeting is presented in Appendix B.

3.2 Stakeholder Committee

The URS Team, in coordination with Griffin-Spalding staff, utilized the Griffin-Spalding Area Transportation Committee as the Stakeholder Committee. The committee comprised of elected and appointed officials, organization representatives, and business and community leaders, assisted the study team in project development. The Stakeholder Committee met on the following dates:

- Wednesday, September 25, 2013
- Wednesday, November 20, 2013
- Wednesday, January 15, 2014
- Wednesday, March 19, 2014
- Wednesday, May 21, 2014

A summary of each stakeholder committee meeting is presented in Appendix C.

3.3 Stakeholder Interviews

Eleven stakeholder interviews were conducted with individuals recognized as a community leader, elected or appointed official, or agency staff member to provide an early exchange of information on project goals, objectives, and the study process and provide input on transportation issues in the area. The following individuals were interviewed:

- Bonnie Pfrogner – Executive Director, Griffin-Spalding Chamber of Commerce
- Chipper Gardener – Commissioner, Spalding County Post 5
- Dick Morrow – Commissioner, City of Griffin District 5
- Chief Kenny West - Director, Spalding County Emergency Management Agency
- Michelle Cannon – Citizen Appointee, Griffin Spalding Transportation Committee, Bicycle Subcommittee
- Neal Bonds
- William Wilson – County Manager, Spalding County
- Chad Jacobs – Community Development Director, Spalding County
- Robert Hiatt – Governmental Services Director, Three Rivers Regional Commission
- Kenny Smith – City Manager, City of Griffin
- Dan Lillis – Workforce Development Director, Three Rivers Regional Commission

Their responses to the interview questions are summarized below.

1. Is some form of public transit needed in Griffin-Spalding?

Public transit in Griffin-Spalding could benefit the members of the community without means of transportation; alleviate traffic problems; and provide an alternative mode of transportation to travel to destinations such as the airport, shopping centers, downtown Griffin, the UGA-Griffin campus, and jobs. There would need to be a balance of what potential riders are willing to pay versus what they can actually spend. While unsure of the type of public transit the feasibility should help identify, the current 5311 service is not sufficient and there needs to be an expanded, regional service that operates on a fixed route schedule to complement it.

However, other local infrastructure issues need to be addressed. There is not enough demand, attractions or destinations, or employment base for local ridership. Public transit may be more beneficial for regional travel, i.e. to Atlanta.

2. Will public transportation contribute to the economic development of the area?

Public transportation could provide additional mobility and accessibility – particularly for the financially challenged, elderly, and infirmed segments of the population – to local and regional destinations. Additional, closer activity centers are needed. Lack of transportation keeps people from working and there is a need for regional connections (Atlanta, Hampton, etc.), not local, to aggressively recruit businesses. However, it is difficult to predict growth, specifically of the UGA-Griffin campus.

3. How high a priority is transit for the area?

Transit is a high priority for the area based on the economic situation of a significant portion of the residents who cannot afford their own vehicle. Approximately 55%-70% of transit riders use it to travel

to work. There needs to be more support for employment, which may rank as a higher priority than transit. It is critical for the region to foster regional connectivity, but not for the city and unincorporated areas. Transit could also assist with alleviating traffic and reducing crime.

4. *Who are the people that most need to be served by transit and what destinations should be targeted?*

The people that most need to be served by transit include seniors/elderly, one-vehicle households, low to moderate income, bicyclists, students, regional job commuters, and carpoolers/vanpoolers.

Destinations that should be targeted by transit include schools and colleges (Southern Crescent Technical College, UGA), hospital/medical center, downtown/government offices (City Hall and County Courthouse), connection to the GRTA line, senior citizen centers, grocers/shopping centers on the outskirts of town, industrial parks, human and social services, parks, emergency services, airport, and adjacent cities and counties for work and school commuters.

5. *What types of transportation options should be considered?*

The types of transportation options that should be considered include:

- Trolley, cabs, independent transport service companies (vans)
- Commuter rail with a feeder system
- Basic circulator/bus system (similar to 5311)
- Small buses
- Mini shuttle to airport, Henry and Clayton Counties Park and Ride lots
- Passenger rail
- Vanpool/Ride share for out of county commuters
- Fixed route bus service would be better used and more dependable
- Part-time trolley downtown and to Sun City

The current 5311 transit service provides more opportunity for leveraging additional funds to support a transit system. There is not enough money or density in the county to support fixed route transit.

6. *Will the people of Griffin-Spalding support some form of financial assistance for public transportation?*

The people of Griffin-Spalding may support a fare, not a tax, as a form of financial assistance for public transportation. User fees or sales taxes, not property taxes, should be considered to fund/subsidize the system. Need to show the benefit of public transportation and consider the lower-income population may not be able to afford it.

Conversely, the vote could be close but unlikely that any new tax or fee would pass. The transportation-dependent who could benefit from the system cannot afford to pay and those who can afford to pay won't because they have their own transportation. The typical taxpayer owns a vehicle, has access to work, and does not see the need for public transportation.

Additional Comments

- Disseminate project information at the Welcome Center
- No place to grow in the city unless annexation occurs
- New business locate to the county since that area can accommodate growth
- Biggest challenge will be getting people involved
- Most of the workforce comes from the south (Bibb, Houston Counties), while the local workforce leaves and goes north. Think east-west sometimes, not just north (Atlanta)
- See vanpools at Lowe's/Home Depot, Ingles on 41

4.0 Existing Conditions and Needs Summary

The City of Griffin and Spalding County currently do not have a dedicated transit system and only participates in the regional Federal Transit Administration 5311 rural transit program administered by the Three Rivers Regional Commission. Very few private transportation providers are operating in the city. Community demographic and socioeconomic data show that Griffin tends to have greater concentrations of populations potentially underserved by the existing transportation system than is found in the county overall, including young persons age 10 to 19, older persons age 65 and over, non-white persons, low-income persons, and those living in households without a vehicle. The greatest concentrations of transit target markets are located near the core of the city in the west-northwest quadrant (north of SR 16, west of US 19/41, and east of Shoal Creek Road) and in the south-southeast quadrant (north of the county line, east of SR 62, south of SR 16, and west of Green Valley Road). Many of the major streets within these areas currently have sidewalks, which could support transit accessibility.



For those who commute beyond the county, top destinations include the I-75 corridor, Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, Jonesboro, and the Peachtree City area. Stakeholders indicated the Kia Plant in West Point, GA, and the Atlanta area as additional work destinations. Locations commonly identified as potential transit destinations include:

- Spalding Regional Hospital
- Senior Centers
- Downtown Griffin and shopping/retail areas along the West Taylor Street
- Southern Crescent Technical College
- University of Georgia Griffin Campus
- Walmart/North Griffin Square Shopping Center
- Municipal and social service agency locations

Community input received thus far in the planning process appears to support some level of dedicated public transportation within the City of Griffin. Though establishment of service should consider the entire community, focus should be placed on serving concentrated populations that lack access to vehicles, persons who cannot drive, and those who cannot afford a vehicle. The current and anticipated increase in fuel costs was cited as a reason for an ever increasing need for public transportation.

Due to the urbanized area of the County, largely represented by the City of Griffin, Spalding County receives an annual allocation of FTA 5307 urban transit program funds that can be utilized to plan and implement more reliable forms of public transit. A share of the FTA 5307 funds was set aside and used toward the completion of this study. As noted in this document, flex zone or route deviation transit that would combine the FTA funding programs may be the most viable option for the community at the moment.

Local funding combined with federal funding increases the opportunity to enhance public transportation within the Griffin-Spalding area; however, a significant challenge is to determine a local funding source.

5.0 Transit Service Alternatives and Recommendations

As Griffin-Spalding currently only provides limited public transportation, the range of choices is broad on what level of investment may be appropriate. Developing suitable transit service alternatives involved examining community demographic characteristics, listening to community and stakeholder input about local needs and travel patterns, and determining which types of transit services would best meet the local needs. The following section provides a description of possible transit service alternatives, discusses what types of transit communities similar to Griffin-Spalding offer, provides a summary of community findings, and presents a suite of potential transit alternatives.

5.1 Transit Options

Transit can take many forms. Intensity of development, population and employment distribution, and community demographics help to define what types of transit may be feasible within an area. In general, greater investment in transit is needed in areas with higher population and employment densities. Lower densities do not mean that transit service is not needed, rather the types of modes change based on the intensity of development. The range of transit options includes different technologies with varying operational characteristics. Table 5-1 provides an overview of common transit services found in the United States and Georgia.

Table 5-1: Transit Service Options

Transit Service Type	Primarily Serves	Where it Operates	Operational Characteristics	Technology
Commuter Rail	Long distance commuter trips	Between outlying areas and major activity centers	Regularly scheduled service operating during commuter peak periods, with some mid-day service; Stops are infrequent at major intercept points	At-grade rail
Heavy Rail	Short to moderate distance trips	Highly urbanized areas with intense residential or employment development	Regularly scheduled frequent service operating daily during defined service period; Stops are at major intercept points spaced one-mile or more apart	Separated-grade rail
Light Rail	Short to moderate distance trips	Highly urbanized areas with intense residential or employment development	Regularly scheduled frequent service operating daily during defined service period; Stops are at major intercept points spaced one-mile or more apart	Both at-grade and separated grade rail
Commuter Express Bus	Long distance commuter trips	Between outlying areas and major activity centers	Regularly schedule service operating during commuter peak periods, with some mid-day service; Stops are few and located at beginning and end of	Coach bus

Transit Service Type	Primarily Serves	Where it Operates	Operational Characteristics	Technology
			route	
Fixed-Route Bus	Local trips	Moderate to high density areas	Regularly scheduled service operating during defined service period; Stops are located at regular intervals along route	Large, medium or small buses; Vans or cut-away buses in smaller markets
Fixed-Route Bus with Route Deviation	Local trips	Moderate to low density areas	Regularly scheduled service operating during defined service period; Stops are located at regular intervals; Service deviates from route within defined service area for scheduled on-request stops	Medium or small buses; Vans or cut-away buses
Demand Response	Local trips	Moderate to low density areas	Service period is defined and schedule is based; Stops are based on service requests	Small buses; Vans or cut-away buses
Subscription Service	Commuter trips	Moderate to low density areas	Regularly scheduled service for identified market at defined stops	Small buses; Vans or cut-away buses
Jitney	Local trips	Moderate density areas	Service operates on a fixed route without a fixed schedule or fixed stops	Small buses; Vans or cut-away buses
Vanpool	Long distance commuter trips	Moderate to low density areas	User defined schedule and stops	Full-size or mini-vans

All of the transit options listed in Table 5-1 except vanpools are operated by either a public or private operator. Vanpools are unique in that generally users operate the vehicles. The level of administration varies greatly for vanpool programs, from only providing assistance in forming vanpools to also purchasing vehicles, providing an insurance pool, maintaining vehicles, and driver training. Additional transit options not listed in Table 5-1 are voucher programs and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs. Voucher programs provide means to subsidize trips for identified clientele in which vouchers are used to pay for trips on private transportation providers, such as taxis. A TDM program focuses on reducing single occupant vehicle (SOV) trips and encouraging travelers to shift to other modes to reduce congestion and environmental impacts of SOV trips. A vanpool program can be part of a TDM program, but TDM programs also include promoting carpools, taking transit, walking, bicycling, changing work hours, or telecommuting to reduce SOV trips.

5.2 Summary of Community Findings

Gauging community interest for supporting public transportation is essential. Providing public transportation requires a significant community investment, which is easier to achieve if the community believes and supports that the investment adds value to the community. For the Griffin-Spalding County Transit Feasibility Study, community input was solicited through public information meetings, a project website link, media outreach, a Stakeholder Committee, and stakeholder interviews. Each stakeholder

and community involvement technique is conducted to reach a different segment of the population and provide a broad sampling of public input. A summary of the public and stakeholder outreach activities can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C.

In general, public input favors some level of public transportation service for Spalding County and the City of Griffin. Some participants rated the priority to initiate service as very high and others indicated transit service is important but not as important as basic government services such as police, fire, and water. Target populations for service include senior citizens, low-income residents and workers, students, disabled persons, and those without access to private vehicles, though service should also extend to the entire population. The most frequently cited locations for service include downtown Griffin, UGA-Griffin Campus, Southern Crescent Technical College, Spalding Regional Medical Center, low-income and senior housing, shopping areas on US 41, Wal-Mart, various employment centers, and government service offices. The greatest need is for local bus service, though commuter bus service is also needed. Related to transit funding, there was some uncertainty expressed about the level of local funding available, though local funding will be required.

The proposed transit options were presented for community consideration and feedback at the January 15, 2014 GSATC meeting and at a public information meeting held on February 20, 2014. The options included promoting and expanding the Georgia Commute Options program within Spalding County, implementing a Flex (Route Deviation) route service within specified quadrants in Spalding County and the City of Griffin, and providing fixed route transit service within the study area. The study team received considerable input about proposed routes, community destinations, and operational characteristics. A downtown transfer center was proposed and it was suggested that a site located on Broad Street at 6th Street and Hill Street would be the preferred location. This location is adjacent to Norfolk Southern's Atlanta/Macon "S" line.

A number of comments were received regarding the proposed operational plan. Stakeholders indicated service frequency and reliability would be critical to the success of public transit in Griffin-Spalding. In lieu of operating a separate paratransit service, it was asked whether requirements could be met by route deviation. Determining the appropriate hours of service should consider the needs of shift works.

5.3 Recommended Transit Alternatives

Factors that influence selection of suitable transit alternatives include: service area, potential transit markets, development patterns, development intensity (density), and community input and interest. Also important for selecting transit service is defining a desired level of service, cost considerations, and potential benefits or impacts. Considering the area's needs, the focus for transit is currently on providing local service. Local service could be best provided through fixed-route or demand response service.

Some type of transit focused on commuter trips could also be considered for the Griffin-Spalding area. The inclusion of Spalding County in the air quality nonattainment area for PM 2.5 indicates a need to reduce single occupant vehicle (SOV) trips to decrease the overall emissions from mobile sources. Griffin-Spalding employers and commuters could benefit from formal participation in a TDM program, such as the Georgia Commute Options. Other commuter options include commuter express bus or commuter rail. The Three Rivers Regional Commission (TRRC) has been exploring commuter bus options. GDOT's commuter rail plans identify a commuter rail line between Atlanta, Lovejoy and Macon and would include a stop in Griffin.

6.0 Evaluation and Assessment of Recommended Alternatives

6.1 Alternatives Evaluation and Assessment

The proposed transit alternatives were developed based on input from a variety of sources. Areas were identified for concentrations of transit markets, places where citizens are most likely to support or need some form of transit. Population and employment densities, socioeconomic and land use data, and transit target markets were assessed. Community input helped to validate major local origins and destinations. Evaluation criteria considered in developing the alternatives included accessibility and proximity to major transit markets and community destinations, accessibility for transit dependent populations, cost effectiveness, and economic development potential for Spalding County and the City of Griffin.

6.2 Propensity for Fixed Route Transit Service Analysis

In this section, the findings from the Existing Conditions and Stakeholder input were combined with an evaluation of Griffin-Spalding considering the propensity of the study area for transit service. The population and employment densities in the study area were compared to industry standard density thresholds for various transit bus service levels. Several studies in the past thirty years have attempted to identify relationships between transit ridership and land use development patterns. Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 16 provides scales for residential and employment densities that have been developed to identify the general type of transit service that can be supported by different local conditions. These are shown in Tables 6-1 and 6-2.

Table 6-1: Relationship between Residential Densities and Transit Services

Residential Density Transit Thresholds	
Type of Service	Residential Density Threshold
Local Bus (1 bus every hour)	4-6 dwelling units/residential acre
Intermediate Bus (1 bus every 30 minutes)	7-14 dwelling units/residential acre
Frequent Bus (1 bus every 10 minutes)	15 + dwelling units/residential acre

Table 6-2: Relationship between Employment Densities and Transit Services

Employment Density Transit Thresholds	
Type of Service	Minimum Employment Density (Jobs/Acre)
Small to large bus regular route service complemented by paratransit service with ~ 30 to 60 minute frequency	Areas with 10 to 25 jobs/acre and 3,000 or more contiguous jobs
Large bus complemented by paratransit service with ~15 to 30 minute frequency	Areas with 26 to 49 jobs/acre and 5,000 or more contiguous jobs
Large bus complemented by paratransit service with ~ 5 to 15 minute frequency. Connection to circulators possible.	Areas with 50 + jobs/acre and 10,000 or more contiguous jobs

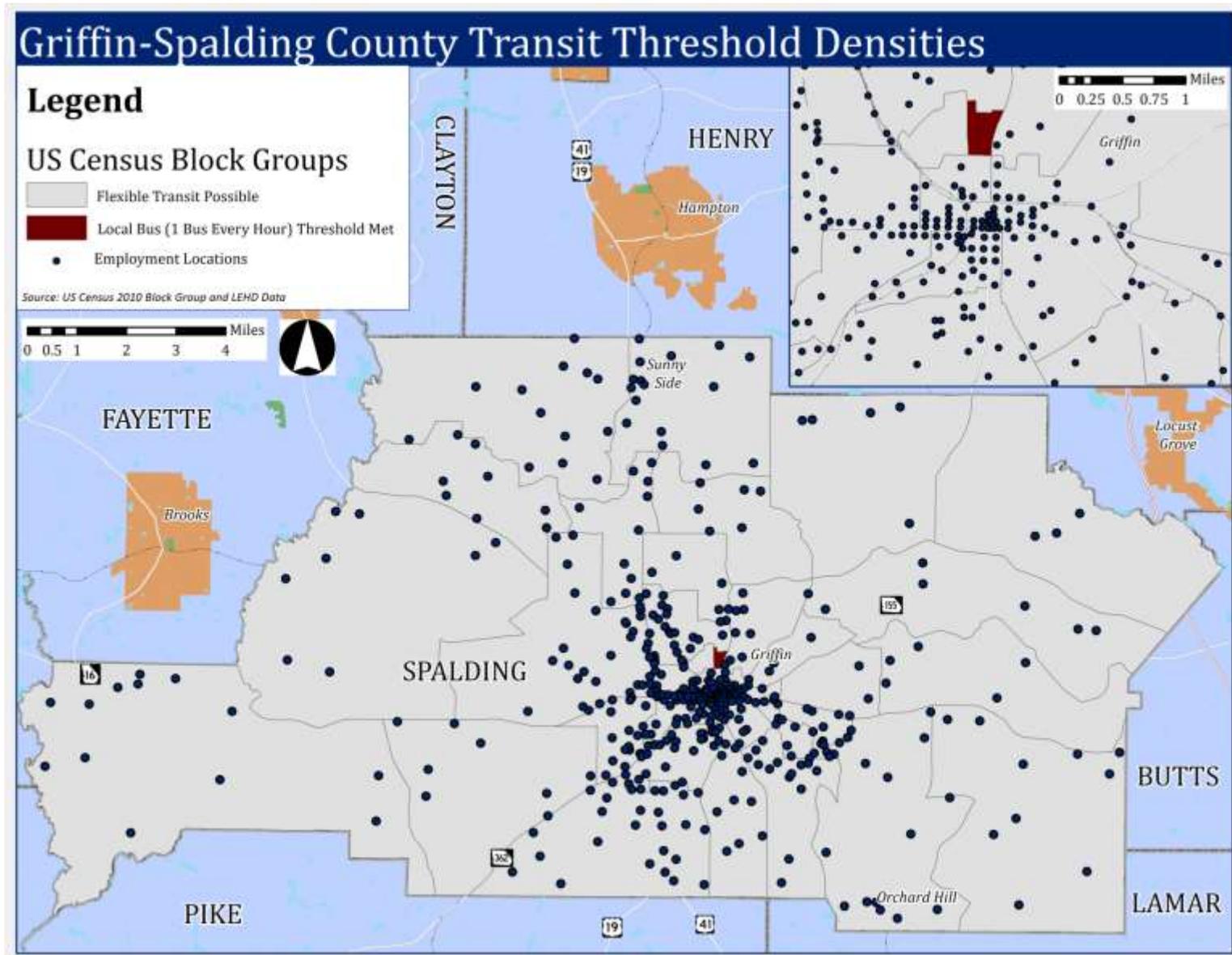
The thresholds listed in Tables 6-1 and 6-2 are generalizations that provide an overall estimate of the need and level of potential transit service. Corridor-specific factors, such as the mix of land uses, pedestrian accessibility, local travel patterns, roadway congestion, urban design elements, and transit service characteristics (existing or proposed) also have an effect on transit ridership. Nonetheless, this general information on residential and employment thresholds can be used at a planning level to identify areas or regions where scheduled transit service may be successful.

Commute patterns to and from the communities in the study area were estimated utilizing Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) available through the United States Census Bureau. Per an overview of the data provided by Census Bureau, these statistics are “a partially synthetic dataset that describes geographic patterns of jobs by their employment locations and residential locations as well as the connections between the two locations.” Additionally, these datasets can be further analyzed to classify employees by age, employment type, gender, income, and other variables.

In determining the estimated housing units per acre, updated housing data from Spalding County was obtained and utilized. The number of housing units per census block group was divided by the number of acres in the census block group and mapped in order to show concentrations of housing units by acre. It is important to note that in this process, some of the development nodes were “diluted” by being grouped with open space and low density land uses. However, the point of this evaluation was to compare the study area’s current density per acre to the density thresholds. While Figure 6-1 indicates one small pocket of the study area has a concentration above the minimum threshold of 4 housing units per acre needed to justify fixed route transit, the study area as a whole falls far short of this criteria minimum. In other words, the Griffin-Spalding study area exhibits rural to suburban densities that are not typically adequate to support fixed route transit. However, there was strong local support for transit and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 grant funds have been accrued to assist with the implementation of fixed route transit service.

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Figure 6-1: Transit Threshold Densities



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Based on the data from the existing conditions review, Stakeholder input, and propensity for fixed route transit analysis, the following findings were determined:

- Area transportation is dominated by privately owned vehicles
- Existing rural transit service is well utilized
- Sufficient demand and funding sources for traditional fixed route service at this time

Based on these findings, fixed route service is feasible in the study area. However, flexible and lower cost forms of transit are available that may serve as alternatives to fixed route service or as a precursor to implementing fixed route transit. While demand for new transit service is low and dedicated funding sources are not currently available, an understanding of these flexible transit services is important should economic conditions improve, fuel costs rise, a significant land use or demographic change occur, and/or new funding sources identified. These alternative forms of transit service are discussed in Section 5.

6.3 Most Promising Alternatives

The proposed transit service alternatives include formal participation in regional TDM programs to serve commuter trips and assist local employers to develop workplace commute alternatives programs; implementation of an On Call route service; and development of a local fixed-route bus system to serve local transit markets in Spalding County and the City of Griffin.

6.4 Georgia Commute Options

Georgia Commute Options is a program of the Georgia Department of Transportation, available through The Clean Air Campaign, metro Atlanta's transportation management associations and regional transportation partners. Georgia Commute Options provides free commuter services to encourage commuters to participate in activities such as carpooling, vanpooling, riding transit, teleworking, bicycling and walking. The program offers:

- Incentives - Current solo drivers to participate in other mobility options. For example, each time a participant logs a green commute trip, they are entered to win a \$25 gift card in a monthly drawing. Additionally, if they participate in a carpool with three people, they can earn \$40 monthly gas cards; carpools with four or more people can earn \$60 monthly gas cards.
- Ridematching - Signing up for Georgia Commute Options gives access to a ridematching database with tens of thousands of Georgia commuters interested in carpooling and vanpooling.
- Guaranteed Ride Home - Commuters participating in Georgia Commute Options qualify for five trips home or to their cars from work each year if an unexpected event occurs.

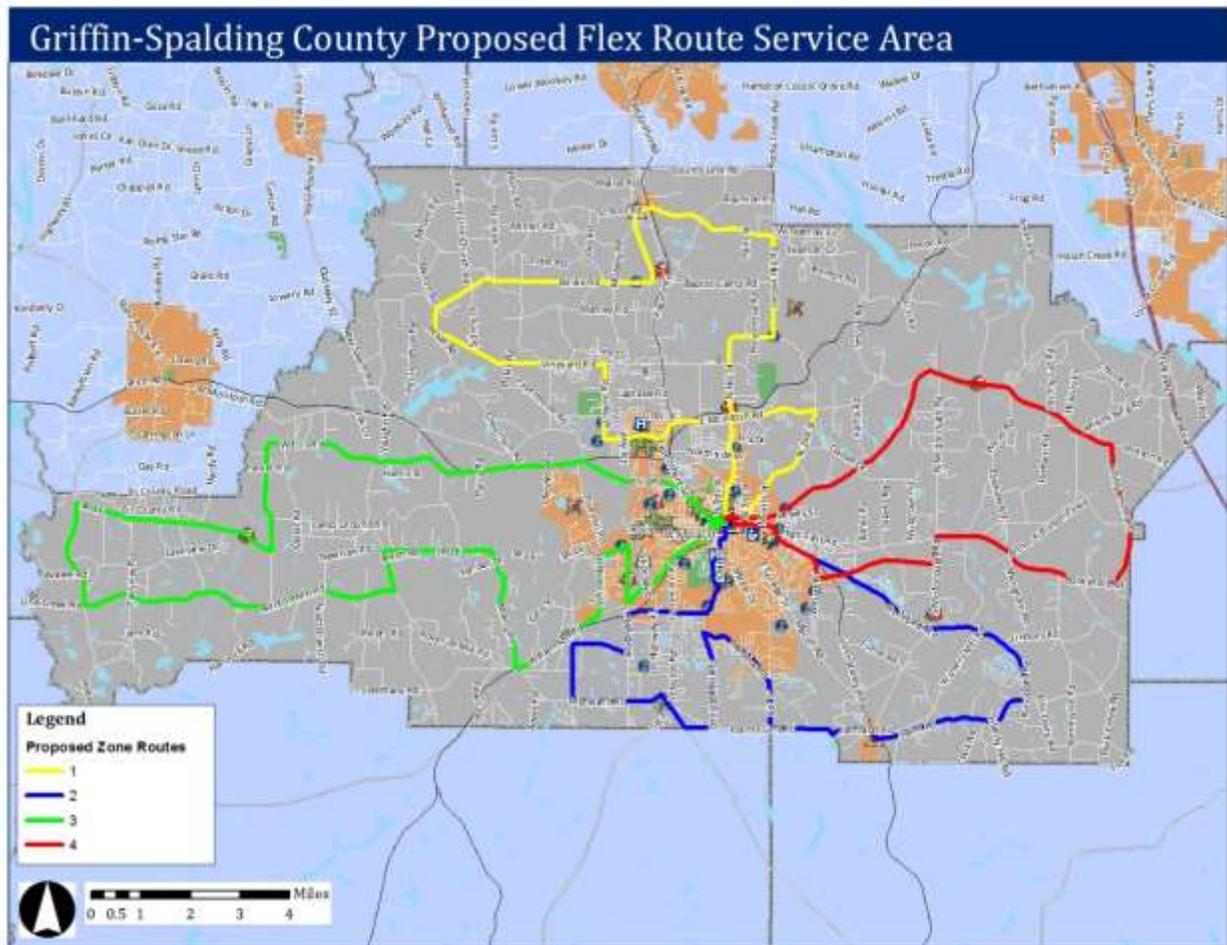
Currently five vanpools are in operation with trip origins in Spalding County. These vanpools operate to the Atlanta metro area and provide trips to Delta Airlines, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) offices, Turner Broadcasting, the Veteran's Administration offices in Decatur and other destinations. The vans average 7 to 10 passengers per trip. Expanding this program throughout Spalding County would be a low cost and easily implementable way to increase mobility options in the area.

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6.5 Flex Service Program

As an initial step or phase to implementing transit service, consideration should be given to a pilot program of a flexible route or “Flex” service concept. The Flex service as envisioned would operate within designated quadrants of the Griffin-Spalding service area. This service would offer the advantages of a fixed route plus the convenience of curbside service and would provide connections between major residential, medical, educational, government, and shopping centers. A specific zone boundary would be established and residents or workers within the zone unable to access an established bus stop would call a designated telephone number at least one hour prior to the desired trip. This service is envisioned to be provided through an expansion of the Griffin-Spalding rural transit service of the Three Rivers Regional Commission transit program. The Flex service would initially operate weekdays from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm, with potential future expanded service hours of 6:00 am - 6:00 pm, as well as complementary weekend service contingent upon demand. Flex service operators would respond to service requests via cell phone within pre-established quadrants of Spalding County and the City of Griffin. The service could have a different fare structure than the current Three Rivers rural program. A benefit of the Flex service is that it could accommodate the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirement for fixed route transit service to include a complementary and separate paratransit service due to the flexible nature of the service. The potential Flex route alignments are shown in Figure 6-2.

Figure 6-2: Potential Flex Route Alignments



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6.6 Proposed Griffin-Spalding Fixed Route Transit System

The proposed fixed routes presented in the February 20, 2014 public information meeting were subsequently refined by Griffin-Spalding staff and the study team. The modified transit system would serve many local destinations radiating from a centralized transfer center providing transit service within the City of Griffin and into Spalding County. A five route transit system was identified to best serve Griffin-Spalding. The routes were developed to link as many local origins and destinations as possible while keeping route lengths and running times reasonable. Service operation assumptions include:

- Operating each route on a 60-minute frequency;
- Capital investment of seven buses with five for operations and two spare units;
- Development of a central transfer center; and
- Complementary demand-response ADA paratransit service.

The operating statistics and ridership estimates for the services are presented in Appendix D.

6.6.1 Routes

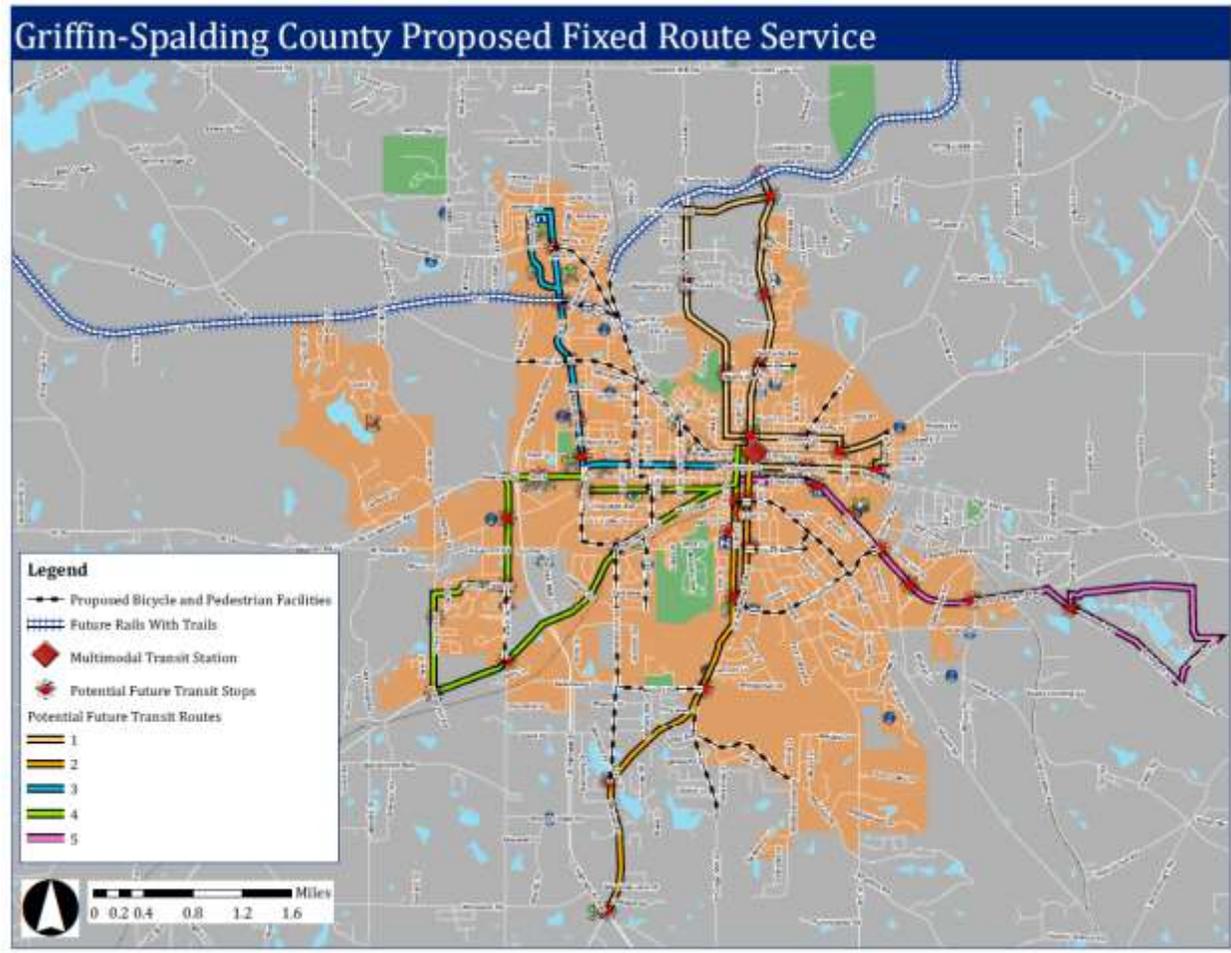
The five proposed routes have been designed to serve all of the compass points within Griffin-Spalding. These five routes are described as follow:

- Route 1 would operate within the northern portion of the service area along N. 9th Street, E. McIntosh Road, N. 6th Street and also to the east along E. Chappel Street, Grady Street, and Spalding Street.
- Route 2 would operate to the southern portion of the service area along US Hwy 19 continuing onto Zebulon Road and terminating in the shopping area at Zebulon Road and US 41 By Pass. Route 2 will also operate on S. 8th Street in order to provide service to Spalding Regional Medical Center and other medical related offices.
- Route 3 would operate to the northwestern quadrant of the service area and travel on W. Solomon Street to North Expressway to the shopping and medical centers located near Wal-Mart.
- Route 4 would operate within the southwestern portion of the service area on S. 9th Street to W. College Street to Pine Hill Road, Carriage Hill Drive, Carver Road, SR 16 (W. Taylor Street) North Expressway, W. Poplar Street and S. 9th Street to the transfer center.
- Route 5 would operate to the eastern portion of the service area via E. Taylor Street, Memorial Drive, and around the Lakes at Green Valley Industrial Park.

The potential route alignments are displayed in Figure 6-3.

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Figure 6-3: Potential Route Alignments



When questioned about the type of vehicles that would be used for operations, the study team indicated that 20-passenger, low floor (accessible), diesel-fueled buses were recommended as they are the most reliable and easiest to maintain. Trolley style buses are attractive, but are not typically easily accessible for wheelchairs and are difficult to maintain. Clean-burning diesel fuels should be considered.

6.6.2 Fare Policy

The per trip fare structure assumed for the purposes of this study was \$1.00 for fixed route and \$2.00 for On Call route service (the current fare charged by Three Rivers Regional Commission for Section 5311 service). Consideration should be given to a fare-free system as well. Fare-free public transit makes the most internal business sense for systems in which the percentage of farebox revenue to operating expenses is quite low. In such cases, the cost associated with collecting and accounting for fares and producing fare media is often close to, or exceeds, the amount of revenue that would be collected from passengers, particularly when taking into account the capital costs of fareboxes, security, money counting equipment, and facilities.

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7.0 Transit Implementation Plan

As part of the Implementation Plan, a five-year phasing approach has been developed for implementing public transportation in Spalding County and the City of Griffin and is described as follows:

7.1 Implementation Phasing

The following narrative describes the proposed overall five-year phasing of the transit program.

Year 1

The first step for implementing a transit program and services is to formally establish a Transit Advisory Committee to provide guidance to assist with the transit implementation process and policy issues. Next, the creation and filling of a dedicated staff position to plan, coordinate, and oversee the transit program would be required. The person selected for this transit coordinator position would immediately initiate start-up activities for the transit program. The recommended initial fixed route and On Call services and fares should be refined and presented at a public hearing, with subsequent formal adoption. In addition to selecting vehicle, facility, and equipment types, grant applications would be prepared and submitted, specifications prepared, and procurements initiated. As applicable, a Request for Proposal (RFP) to obtain a contract service provider would be developed and issued, with subsequent selection, or applicable hiring of the management and operating staff. A marketing/promotion/information program would also be developed and implemented. Ongoing coordination with ARC and GDOT will be required to ensure proper grant and technical support are available to the program. Additionally, the Transit Coordinator would oversee coordination activities with Georgia Commute Options staff.

Year 2

The transit service provider would be selected and obtain the operating facility and other required program support elements. Program capital elements such as bus stops, shelters, vehicles, computers, and other capital items would be procured and received. Facility improvements, including installation of bus stops, shelters, and, if applicable, a Transit Center would be undertaken.

Year 3

Weekday revenue service would be inaugurated along with ADA complementary paratransit service, dependent upon implementation of a fixed route system. Service performance and community interest should be closely monitored. If rural service and/or rideshare program warranted, prepare/submit applicable grant application(s)

Year 4

Based on community acceptance of the new services and their initial performance, an assessment should be made to determine if modification to the service is warranted. Coordination with applicable agencies should be continued.

Year 5

Operation of the weekday and any required paratransit service would continue and should be closely monitored to review performance.

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7.2 Management Options

7.2.1 Direct (Public-Sector Management and Operation)

The public-sector entity would be responsible for the hiring of a transit management executive and all necessary staff. Vehicles and equipment would be handled through a public procurement process.

Advantages associated with the Direct option include full continuing control by the local jurisdiction over the quality of transit operations. The public entity could incorporate standards of administration and performance consistent with standards applicable to City and/or County employees. An additional benefit due to the addition of mechanics, technicians, and vehicles would be the enhanced capacity of performing fleet maintenance functions in-house rather than externally. Expenses supporting profit and overhead due to private-sector management or operation would be foregone.

Potential disadvantages with the Direct option include the challenges of hiring and retaining expert personnel at satisfactory wage levels to oversee transit operations. Additionally, as public employees, transit staff members such as drivers are often unionized, such as in Atlanta and Savannah. The Direct option will require stringent care to assure conformance with federal labor protection regulations and may pose additional challenges for management when administering labor contracts. Finally, without strong performance measures and guidelines for administration in place, day-to-day service decision making can become highly susceptible to the political processes at the municipal government level.

7.2.2 Contract Management (Public-Sector Management / Private-Sector Operation)

This scenario involves the competitive selection of a firm to manage the transit service. The public-sector entity owns and maintains the equipment, facility, and vehicles and hires the labor to support the transit service. Private-sector transit management firms typically have access to experienced and specialized personnel that is needed often, but may be too expensive for the public-sector entity to retain directly and sustain year-round. Public-sector control is maintained, but unlike the Direct option, management expertise can be competitively procured from the private-sector entity as needed on a contract basis.

In addition to potential cost-effectiveness gains relative to the Direct option, transit management firms can be highly experienced in pooling resources to respond to a host of matters relating to intergovernmental reporting and compliance, service promotion, labor, and operations, and may exceed the responsiveness capacities of an individual public-sector management executive or a limited public-sector management team.

Without regard to possible benefits, the Contract Management option is likely to be more expensive than the Direct option, because of the needs to consult specialized staff and satisfy profit and overhead requirements by private-sector managers. Also, due to the public operation of services, the potential remains for unionization among personnel, particularly vehicle operators.

7.2.3 Turnkey (Private-Sector Management and Operation)

This option involves the competitive selection of a firm to establish, operate, and manage the transit service. Equipment, labor, and facilities are typically provided by the turnkey firm, although the public-sector entity typically maintains title to the transit vehicles. While a for-profit service typically provides

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this service, in some cases private non-profit organizations and even separate public bodies serve as contractors. The public-sector entity provides the funding to support the service; however the turnkey firm is fully responsible for all aspects of service operations.

Among key advantages, turnkey procurement processes are periodic and offer the public entity quality assurance with respect to accountability and cost effectiveness. Specifically, selected firms would be self-interested in continuously supporting high-quality, successful transit operations while identifying innovative means to minimize expenses. Further, the contracting of transit operations may limit the applicability of federal labor protection regulations to the public-sector entity. Limiting public investment in transit-related infrastructure and personnel in this manner can provide some communities a simpler “exit strategy” in the event such services are no longer warranted in the future. Finally, private-sector service decisions are generally insulated from the political process.

Even with the diminished day-to-day public control over service decisions, oversight mechanisms and measures must still be conducted by staff representing the public-sector entity, demonstrating accountability to the taxpaying public and citizens at-large. The success of the transit service as a turnkey operation may depend on the levels of expertise dedicated by the firm, and the level of oversight provided by the public sector. As a disadvantage, the periodic procurement processes can risk disruptions to service continuity whenever non-incumbent firms are selected and transitions among staff and infrastructure must occur.

7.3 Staffing Plan

This section presents the potential personnel staff and labor structure of the transit organization. Figure 7-1 displays a potential organization chart for the initial transit program.

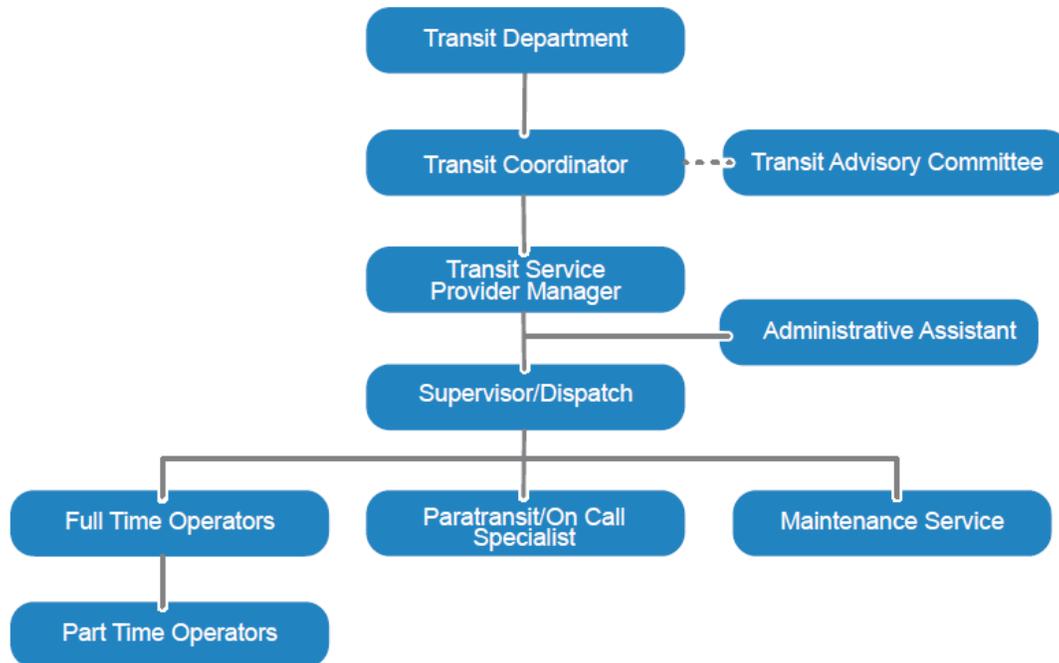
The transit entity should initially hire or appoint a transit coordinator. This position would have the primary responsibility to represent the agency in all transit related matters. Establishment of a Transit Advisory Committee should be considered with representatives to be appointed by the Transit Commission. This committee would be available in an advisory capacity to assist in the decision making process and other ongoing transit related issues.

In smaller transit operations, the functions of operator dispatching and supervision are often combined into one primary position. To ensure operator work assignments are met in a timely fashion, a dispatcher is placed at the facility to perform this task. The dispatcher tracks attendance and should an operator not report for duty, the dispatcher is responsible for securing a replacement operator to ensure continued service is provided. Because operators are continually driving transit vehicles in route service, supervision must be periodically performed in the field. Examples of field or on-street supervision tasks include:

- Monitoring driver and service activity
- Ensuring schedule adherence
- Assisting drivers with service interruptions such as accidents, disruptive passengers, and vehicle breakdowns
- Assisting with operator training

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Figure 7-1: Potential Transit Organization



An ADA paratransit specialist is included to perform the daily paratransit reservation and scheduling tasks, as well as perform the client eligibility and certification process.

7.4 Standard Operating Procedures Manual

The following topics should be considered for inclusion in a System Operating Procedures Manual. The purpose of this procedures manual is to document a series of steps to be followed to ensure a consistent and repetitive approach is provided to accomplish specified end results in various operational categories.

- Introduction
- Employee Relations, Training, and Development
- Vehicle Operation
- Drug and Alcohol
- Customer Service
- Public Information
- Communications
- Dispatching and Scheduling
- Facility Operations and Maintenance
- Revenue Handling and Processing
- ADA/Paratransit

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- Fleet Maintenance
- Bus Stop Placement/Maintenance
- Bus Shelters
- System Safety, Security, and Emergencies
- System Accounting, Records, and Reporting
- Procurement

7.5 Fleet Maintenance

A major goal of every transit system should be to ensure that the transit fleet is safe, reliable, and attractive. A fleet management plan (FMP) should be developed to ensure that this goal is continually achieved through either an agency maintenance group or contract service provider. The FMP should address the following areas:

- Maintenance organization and responsibilities
- Vehicle defect identification, reporting, and correction process
- Road call procedures
- Cleaning procedures
- Accident/damage repair
- Fuel and fluid availability, use, and analysis
- Work order process
- Parts availability and accountability
- Vehicle records/tracking process
- Preventive maintenance inspection process
- Warranty recovery process
- Lift/ramp maintenance process
- Air conditioning maintenance process
- Maintenance training program
- Quality assurance program

7.6 Sample Ride Guide and Policies

In order to inform customers about how to use the system and regulations, a Sample Ride Guide and Policies document is included in Appendix E.

7.7 Service Start-up Plan

A service start-up plan includes numerous tasks that must be implemented through a timely and orderly method. The plan should include key categories/activities as included in Appendix F.

7.8 National Transit Database (NTD) Reporting Protocol

All recipients of FTA Section 5307 and Section 5311 Program funding are required to report to the NTD. The annual report from each FTA funding recipient will contain information on capital investment, operation, and service provided with the funds. It will include total annual revenue; sources of revenue; total annual operating costs; total annual capital costs; fleet size and type and related facilities; revenue vehicle miles; and ridership.

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7.9 Legal Issues

Legal considerations for the transit system include entering into contracts with transit service management firms, negotiating with union representatives, and ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local regulations and requirements. Additionally, depending on how a transit system is administered, contractual agreements may be required between several jurisdictions and governmental entities including:

- City of Griffin
- Spalding County
- Three Rivers Regional Commission
- Atlanta Regional Commission
- Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
- Georgia Department of Transportation

7.10 Potential Sources for Technical Assistance

Potential technical assistance sources for transit service implementation and ongoing operational support include:

- GDOT Office of Intermodal Programs
- Three Rivers Regional Commission
- Georgia Transit Association (GTA)
- Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA)
- American Public Transportation Association (APTA)
- Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Transportation Research Board (TRB)
- Transit related vendors, suppliers, and consultants
- Other similar transit providers

7.11 Administrative Support

As the formal transit program will be created as some form of a local governmental unit, any applicable procedures, ordinances, or regulations should be followed. Examples could include procurement procedures, code of ethics, public meeting procedures, legal and personnel requirements, and financial reporting.

7.12 Outreach and Coordination

7.12.1 Public Involvement Plan

The transportation system affects quality of life and provides a link to essential needs and services. This is particularly true of public transportation which, in most cases, provides service to populations with limited incomes or mobility choices. As such, continued public involvement in the implementation of transit service for the Griffin-Spalding area will be very important.

Public input should be solicited and incorporated into the development of service operations, facilities and marketing. A requirement of the FTA Section 5307 and 5311 funding programs is the development of a public participation program. Special attention and effort must be offered to reach out to traditionally underserved populations in future phases of transit implementation. These population

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groups have greater difficulty getting to jobs, schools, recreation and shopping than the population at large.

7.12.2 Marketing Plan

A comprehensive marketing plan for the recommended system should be developed to assist in implementing the new system. A strong marketing plan is crucial for establishing the foundation for future marketing strategies once the implementation is completed.

Items to be addressed could include:

- Overall system image
- Graphics
- Community outreach
- Advertising
- Coordination techniques with other organizations

It is essential that a distinctive system logo, vehicle paint scheme, signage, and theme for the new services be developed to generate a unique and positive image for the transit program. A key recommendation is that the image (logo/graphics) created be unique to the service area and avoid the more conventional or institutional look often utilized by new transit systems.

Customer Service is closely linked with marketing as this function typically:

- Provides transit service information through various methods including internet, printed media, and telephone
- Coordinates the sale of fare media
- Handles customer complaints, commendations, inquiries, requests, and suggestions
- Responsible for "Lost and Found"

7.13 Service Monitoring

Transit systems have recurrent needs and requirements to collect and report a wide range of information about operations and ridership. The continual compilation of data is essential for the effective planning and management of transit services. Without detailed operations information, the ability to effectively monitor and report system performance and subsequently revise services would be severely impacted. Resource limitations frequently limit comprehensive service monitoring programs. However, the information resulting from service monitoring is very important because fundamental transit functions such as scheduling, service planning, maintenance, finance, and marketing require this data for decision making and reporting. Key considerations for establishing a service monitoring program include:

- Identification of the data categories to be collected
- Methods and sources to be used in data collection
- Procedures to be used to process and store the data
- Evaluating and reporting the data in a meaningful and ongoing format
- Determining where and ensuring required reports are properly transmitted

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Program elements must be identified prior to the initiation of service as certain data must be recorded on a daily basis. While the majority of information may, in the case of a contract service provider, be collected and processed by the contractor, the agency must ensure the data is collected, evaluated, and reported in an accurate and timely manner. In addition to compilation of statistical data, periodic field observations of system operations and contract monitoring must also be regularly undertaken.

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8.0 Potential Funding Sources and Financial Projections

8.1 Potential Funding Sources

Potential funding sources for the new transit system include funding from various federal transit related categories as well as from system revenue, local agencies, the state, and private interest organizations. The primary federal programs that provide planning, operational, and capital funding include the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), FTA Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funding Program, and FTA Section 5311 Rural and Small Urban Areas. Other FTA programs are targeted for particular programs such as using clean fuels, providing transportation for access to jobs, elderly and disabled persons. Funding is also available through GDOT for capital related categories.

8.1.1 Federal Funding Sources

A summary of the applicable major federal programs follows.

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

The primary purpose of the CMAQ program is to fund transportation projects and programs in nonattainment and maintenance areas which reduce transportation-related emissions. Jointly administered by FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the CMAQ program was reauthorized under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005, and most recently, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) in July, 2012. Through the close of the SAFETEA-LU period in 2012, the CMAQ program has provided nearly \$30 billion in just under 29,000 transportation-environmental projects to State DOTs, metropolitan planning organizations, and other sponsors across the country. As with its predecessor legislation, the MAP-21 provides funding to areas in nonattainment or maintenance for ozone, carbon monoxide, and/or particulate matter.

The MAP-21 provides just over \$2.2 billion in CMAQ funding for each year of the authorization-2013 and 2014. While project eligibility remains basically the same, the legislation places considerable emphasis on diesel engine retrofits and other efforts that underscore the priority on reducing fine particle pollution. If approved, CMAQ program funds could provide the majority of operating subsidies for up to three years of transit operations. After this funding is depleted, FTA Section 5307 or 5311 Transportation Programs (described below) could be utilized to provide an operating subsidy. However, these programs require a more significant local match than CMAQ requires.

In cases where specific guidance is not provided, the following should guide CMAQ eligibility decisions.

Section 125 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76) (2014 Appropriations Act), modified 23 U.S.C. 149(m) to eliminate any time limitation on the use of CMAQ funds for operating assistance for certain activities. This Revised Interim Guidance updates and supersedes Interim Guidance on CMAQ Operating Assistance issued in June 2013.

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Many transit projects are eligible for CMAQ funds. The general guideline for determining eligibility is whether the project increases transit capacity and would likely result in an increase in transit ridership and a potential reduction in congestion. As with other types of CMAQ projects, there should be a quantified estimate of the project's emissions benefits accompanying the proposal.

The FTA administers most transit projects. For such projects, after the FTA determines a project eligible, CMAQ funds will be transferred, or "flexed," from the FHWA to the FTA, and the project will be administered according to the appropriate FTA program requirements. Certain types of eligible transit projects for which FTA lacks statutory authority, such as diesel retrofit equipment for public school bus fleets, may be the responsibility of the State or other eligible project sponsor and are administered by FHWA.

- a. Facilities - New transit facilities (e.g., lines, stations, terminals, transfer facilities) are eligible if they are associated with new or enhanced public transit, passenger rail, or other similar services. Routine maintenance or rehabilitation of existing facilities is not eligible, as it does not reduce emissions. However, rehabilitation of a facility may be eligible if the vast majority of the project involves physical improvements that will increase transit service capacity. In such cases there should be supporting documentation showing an expected increase in transit ridership that is more than minimal. If the vast majority of the project involves capacity enhancements, other elements involving refurbishment and replacement-in-kind also are eligible.
- b. Vehicles and Equipment - New transit vehicles (bus, rail, or van) to expand the fleet or replace existing vehicles are eligible. Transit agencies are encouraged to purchase vehicles that are most cost-effective in reducing emissions. Diesel engine retrofits, such as replacement engines and exhaust after-treatment devices, are eligible if certified or verified by the EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB). Routine preventive maintenance for vehicles is not eligible as it only returns the vehicles to baseline conditions. Other than diesel engine retrofits, other transit equipment may be eligible if it represents a major systemwide upgrade that will significantly improve speed or reliability of transit service, such as advanced signal and communications systems.
- c. Fuel - Fuel, whether conventional or alternative fuel, is an eligible expense only as part of a project providing operating assistance for new or expanded transit service under the CMAQ program. This includes fuels and fuel additives considered diesel retrofit technologies by the EPA or CARB. Purchase of alternative fuels is authorized in some States based on the continuation of a series of exemptions for uses expressly eligible for CMAQ funding under SAFETEA-LU section 1808(k) and certain provisions in subsequent appropriations acts.
- d. Operating Assistance - Operating assistance to introduce new transit service or expand existing transit service is eligible. The eligibility applies regardless of the size of the urbanized area (UZA) or whether a particular grantee is or was previously authorized to use funding under Chapter 53 of Title 49 U.S.C. for operating assistance.
- e. Transit Fare Subsidies - The CMAQ funds may be used to subsidize regular transit fares in an effort to prevent the NAAQS from being exceeded, but only under the following conditions: The reduced or free fare should be part of a comprehensive area wide program to prevent such an

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anticipated exceedance. For example, "Ozone Action" programs vary in scope around the country, but they generally include actions that individuals and employers can take, and they are aimed at all major sources of air pollution, not just transportation. The subsidized fare should be available to the general public and may not be limited to specific groups. It may only be offered during periods of elevated pollution when the threat of exceeding the NAAQS is greatest; e.g., it is not intended for the entire high-ozone season. The fare subsidy proposal should demonstrate that the responsible local agencies will combine the reduced or free fare with a robust marketing program to inform SOV drivers of other transportation options. Because the fare subsidy is not strictly a form of operating assistance, it would not be subject to the 5-year limit.

There are several general conditions for operating assistance eligibility under the CMAQ program (see the November 2013 CMAQ Program Interim Guidance for a complete discussion on CMAQ project eligibility requirements):

- Operating assistance is limited to start up operating costs for new transportation services or the incremental costs of expanding such services, including transit, commuter and intercity passenger rail services, intermodal facilities, and travel demand management strategies, including traffic operation centers.
- In using CMAQ funds for operating assistance, the intent is to help start up viable new transportation services that can demonstrate air quality benefits and eventually cover costs as much as possible. Other funding sources should supplement and ultimately replace CMAQ funds for operating assistance, as these projects no longer represent additional, net air quality benefits but have become part of the baseline transportation network. The provisions in 23 U.S.C. 116 place responsibilities for maintenance of transportation facilities on the States. Since facility maintenance is akin to operations, a time-limited period of CMAQ assistance provides adequate incentive and flexibility while not creating a pattern of excessive or even perpetual support.
- Operating assistance includes all costs of providing new transportation services, including, but not limited to, labor, fuel, administrative costs, and maintenance.
- When CMAQ funds are used for operating assistance, non-Federal share requirements still apply.
- With the focus on start-up, and recognizing the importance of flexibility in the timing of financial assistance, the 3 years of operating assistance allowable under the CMAQ program may now be spread over a longer period, for a total of up to 5 sequential years of support. Grantees who propose to use CMAQ funding for operating support may spread the third year amount (an amount not to exceed the greater of year 1 or 2) across an additional 2 years (i.e. years 4 and 5). This approach will provide an incremental, taper-down approach, while other funding is used for a higher proportion of the operating costs as needed. See Table 8-1 for examples of possible funding allocations. At the conclusion of the 5-year period, operating costs would have to be maintained with non-CMAQ funding. It is anticipated that this approach may enable a transition to more independent system operation. The amounts which apply to years 1 and/or 2 are established at the discretion of the State or local sponsor.

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Table 8-1: Example Allocations of CMAQ Funds for Operating Assistance

Example	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
A	\$300	\$300	\$200	\$50	\$50	\$900
B	300	300	100	100	100	900
C	100	400	200	100	100	900

Section 5307 – Bus and Bus Related Facilities Program

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funding program distributes funding for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Recipients of funding must be public agencies 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, urbanized areas between 50,000 and 200,000 in population receive funding through the Governor or Governor’s designee. The designated recipient in is the.

In the Griffin-Spalding area, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) serves as the “designated recipient”. The chief role for the designated recipient, according to the federal metropolitan planning regulation, is to administer the apportionment of funds and to ensure that the planning process for the funds is maintained. They also ensure that direct recipients (such as local transit agencies) do not exceed appropriations with any grant application.

In addition to these changes, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) also created a new program under Section 5339 to supplement capital funding for bus programs which is also available in Georgia. The allocation of 5339 received by GDOT is available to all small urban programs via a competitive grant application process.

The percentage of the total appropriated amount to be allocated to urban areas is illustrated in Figure 8-1. Section 5307 funding is apportioned based on a legislated formula. For areas of 50,000 to 199,999 in population, the formula is based on population and population density (Labeled “A” in Figure 8-1). For areas with populations of 200,000 and more, the formula includes a combination of service statistics and productivity metrics in addition to population and population density.

A minimum local match must cover between 10-50% of project capital costs. Overall, the Federal share is not to exceed 80% of the net project cost. However, the Federal share may be up to 90% for costs related to bicycle activity or compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Clean Air Act. The federal share may not exceed 50% of operating expenses.

MAP-21, signed into law on July 6, 2012, authorizes and governs federal surface transportation spending. Several changes to the 5307 program were implemented. The MAP-21 legislation:

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- Includes a tier of funding based on area's share of low-income population, as labeled "B" in Figure 8-1.
- Incorporates eligible activities previously funded through 5316 JARC program
- Allows for local match to include funding from other government agencies and certain expenditures under vanpool programs
- Extends the availability of funds under a 5307 grant from four years to six.

Eligible activities for small urban systems include:

- Planning, engineering design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies;
- Job access and reverse commute (JARC) projects (formerly 5316);
- Capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as replacement of buses, overhaul of buses, rebuilding of buses, crime prevention and security equipment and construction of maintenance and passenger facilities;
- 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;
- Preventive maintenance;
- Operating assistance for urbanized areas with populations less than 200,000. In these areas, at least one percent of the funding must be used for transit safety and security enhancement activities.

Small urban systems are eligible for one other allocation of 5307. The Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) program (labeled with a "C" in Figure 8-1) is a 1.5% set aside at FTA that provides additional funding to those systems exhibiting an intensity of service that normally corresponds to larger systems. The program uses service density and per capita productivity metrics to assess the intensity of service for small urban systems.

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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.

State and local governments, non-profit organizations (including Indian tribes and groups), and public transit operators are the eligible recipients of these funds. 5311 funds may be used for capital, operating, and administrative purposes. 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. 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.

Differences between 5311 to 5307

The administration of the 5307 and 5311 involves a number of differences between the two programs above and beyond the federal regulatory differences. Federally, the majority of eligible expenses and local match requirements are very similar between the programs. For example, planning, JARC, and capital expenses are eligible at 80% federal share but without some of the additional allowances. Some ADA items under 5307 can have a higher federal match. The matching requirement for operating costs will move to 50/50% federal/local share.

Another difference is that the general description of 5311 eligible activities specifically mentions administrative expenses, while 5307 does not. Some of Griffin-Spalding's funding under administrative expenses as a 5311 may be directly attributable to planning, a capital project, system operation, or JARC project, and would be eligible for funding at the rate designated for those eligible expenses under 5307.

Finally, the apportionment formula is also different between 5307 and 5311. The apportionment formula for 5307, based on population and population density, is decidedly different from the formula for 5311, which allocates funds based on land area and population (83.15%) and land area, vehicle revenue miles and low income population (16.85%). The apportionment of 5311 that comes to the State is then distributed to rural systems via a competitive grant process.

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8.1.2 State Funding

The State of Georgia, under GDOT, has administrative responsibility for the federal programs related to transit operating and capital for cities with populations under 200,000. Section 5307 and 5311 programs have administrative guides that are updated for each fiscal year and are available through the Office of Intermodal Programs. Contact with GDOT should be made, and the program's administrative guides should be reviewed to determine the availability and timing for funding. The state does provide matching shares for capital grants for the Section 5311 programs. The state provides no funding assistance for transit operations.

8.1.3 Local Funding

The local share for funding transit capital and operating expenses 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, 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. Consideration should be given to identifying these potential partners in formulating strategies to create a successful transit system.

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. For example, Athens, Georgia has utilized SPLOST funding to finance a bus shelter program, construct a Multi-Modal Transportation Center (MMTC), and purchase and replace 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.

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.

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8.2 Transit Operating and Capital Financial Projections

Operating and capital cost estimates for the proposed On Call and fixed route service were prepared for using CMAQ, Section 5307, and Section 5311 as funding sources. Table 8-2 shows the Transit Program Operating Projection utilizing Section 5311 funding for the On Call service. CMAQ funding was utilized for the fixed route service for the first three years with 5307 funding utilized after the CMAQ funding expires. Table 8-2 also includes a seven-year forecast of annual estimated ridership, operating costs, fare revenue, and subsidy funding requirements.

Table 8-2: Transit Program Operating Projection (Assuming CMAQ as Funding Source)

Year	Program Elements	Est. Annual Riderhip ¹	Operating Cost ²	Average Fare (Est.)	Fare Revenue	Total Subsidy	Federal Share ³	State Share	Local Share
1	Administration	-	\$60,000	-	-	\$60,000	\$30,000	-	\$30,000
	Total	-	\$60,000	-	-	\$60,000	\$30,000	-	\$30,000
2	Administration	-	\$61,800	-	-	\$61,800	\$30,900	-	\$30,900
	Flex Service	20,400	\$122,400	\$2.00	\$40,800	\$81,600	\$65,280	-	\$16,320
	Total	20,400	\$184,200	-	-	\$143,400	\$96,180	-	\$71,700
3	Administration	-	\$63,654	-	-	\$63,654	\$31,827	-	\$31,827
	Fixed Route	91,800	\$612,000	\$1.00	\$91,800	\$520,200	\$416,160	-	\$104,040
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	21,420	\$126,072	\$2.00	\$42,840	\$83,232	\$66,586	-	\$16,646
	Total	113,220	\$801,726	-	\$134,640	\$667,086	\$514,573	-	\$152,513
4	Administration	-	\$65,564	-	-	\$65,564	\$32,782	-	\$32,782
	Fixed Route	96,390	\$630,360	\$1.00	\$96,390	\$533,970	\$427,176	-	\$106,794
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	22,491	\$129,854	\$2.00	\$44,982	\$84,872	\$67,898	-	\$16,974
	Total	118,881	\$825,778	-	\$141,372	\$684,406	\$527,856	-	\$156,550
5	Administration	-	\$67,531	-	-	\$67,531	\$33,766	-	\$33,766
	Fixed Route	101,210	\$649,271	\$1.00	\$101,210	\$548,061	\$438,449	-	\$109,612
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	23,616	\$133,750	\$2.00	\$47,232	\$86,518	\$69,214	-	\$17,304
	Total	124,826	\$850,552	-	\$148,442	\$702,110	\$541,429	-	\$160,681
6	Administration	-	\$69,557	-	-	\$69,557	\$34,779	-	\$34,779
	Fixed Route	116,392	\$668,749	\$1.00	\$116,392	\$552,357	\$276,179	-	\$276,179
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	24,797	\$137,763	\$2.00	\$49,594	\$88,169	\$70,535	-	\$17,634
	Total	141,189	\$876,069	-	\$165,986	\$710,083	\$381,492	-	\$328,591
7	Administration	-	\$71,644	-	-	\$71,644	\$35,822	-	\$35,822
	Fixed Route	122,212	\$688,811	\$1.00	\$122,212	\$566,599	\$283,300	-	\$283,300
	ADA Paratransit/Flex	26,037	\$141,896	\$2.00	\$52,074	\$89,822	\$71,858	-	\$17,964
	Total	148,249	\$902,351	-	\$174,286	\$728,065	\$390,979	-	\$337,086

1. Ridership estimate assumes 9 passengers per hour and annual increase of 5%

2. Operating Cost assumes \$60.00 per revenue hour and includes estimated 3% CPI annual increase

3. Federal contribution under CMAQ Program is 80% of operating costs and remainder local.

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Table 8-3 displays the Transit Program Capital Projection utilizing 5307 funding parameters for the seven-year period, including estimated vehicle, passenger amenities, and office/computer equipment and subsidy funding requirements.

Table 8-3: Transit Program Capital Projection (Assuming 5307 as Funding Source)

Capital Facility Improvement Cost Estimates					
Type	Units	Estimated Unit Cost	Total	Federal Share (80%)	Local Share (20%)
Transit Vehicles	7	\$110,000	\$770,000	\$616,000	\$154,000
Support Vehicle	1	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$24,000	\$6,000
Transit Center	1	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$240,000	\$60,000
Shelters	10	\$6,000	\$60,000	\$48,000	\$12,000
Bus Stops	50	\$250	\$12,500	\$10,000	\$2,500
Software/Hardware	-	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$16,000	\$4,000
Office Equipment	-	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$12,000	\$3,000
Totals			\$1,207,500	\$966,000	\$241,500

Note: Any cost and/or quantity opinions, estimates or forecasts provided by the URS was on a basis of experience and judgment, but since URS has no control over market conditions or bidding procedures, URS cannot and does not warrant that bids, ultimate construction cost, or project economics will not vary from such opinions, estimates or forecasts

Based on the Transit Program Operating and Capital projections, CMAQ funding should be considered for the first three years of fixed route operation and 5307 funds for capital equipment and facility requirements. This would be dependent upon Griffin-Spalding applying for and being approved for this funding. Once the three year limit for CMAQ funding expired, the transit system should utilize Section 5307 funding for operations.

APPENDIX A: Existing Griffin-Spalding Area Plans and Studies

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Summary of Reviewed Plans

Spalding County

Spalding County, *Spalding County, Georgia Comprehensive Transportation Plan*, 2008

Spalding County, *2024 Spalding County Comprehensive Plan*, December 2004.

McIntosh Trail Regional Development Center, *Spalding County Rural Transit Development Plan*, June

City of Griffin

City of Griffin, *Griffin Comprehensive Transportation Plan*, April 2011

City of Griffin, *2014-2034 Comprehensive Plan*, September 2013

City of Griffin, *West Griffin Activity Center Livable Centers Initiative Study*, February 2010

City of Griffin, *Town Center Livable Centers Initiative Study*, November 2006

Regional or Multijurisdictional Studies

Transit Planning Board, *Concept 3 Regional Transit Vision*, December 2008 with project list updated November 2012

Atlanta Regional Commission, *Tara Boulevard-US 19/41 Multimodal Corridor Study*, April 2007

Atlanta Regional Commission, *Southern Regional Accessibility Study*, September 2007

City of Griffin and Spalding County, *North Hill Street Master Plan*, 2008

Spalding County, *Roosevelt Railroad Rail-with-Trail Multi-use Study*, January 2011
2007

Spalding County, *Tri-County Crossing Livable Centers Initiative Study*, March 2009

Summaries

Spalding County Comprehensive Transportation Plan, 2008

Report Purpose

The *Spalding County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (SCCTP)* was a comprehensive multimodal study that provided a long-range plan for transportation investments through 2030 for Spalding County and its cities. The SCCTP examined existing conditions and future needs, developed a policy framework for recommendations, established a list of priority projects for investment, and provided an implementation plan that considered various funding scenarios. The SCCTP was partially funded through a grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and provided a list of projects that could be advanced into the regional transportation planning program, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Geographic Focus

Spalding County and the Cities of Griffin, Orchard Hill, and Sunny Side

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The SCCTP established the need to develop a countywide transit plan to provide for seamless public transportation services throughout the County and connect to adjacent jurisdictions. Included in the recommendations are overall guiding policies to address transit and travel demand management (TDM). Policies focused on integrating transit planning into planning for other transportation infrastructure as

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well as development. One policy recommended developing a circulator-system demonstration project within the Sunnyside activity center.

Transit needs identified included:

- Expanding the current rural demand-response system funded through FTA 5311 program by adding services funded through other federal programs including the Job Access and Reverse Commute, New Freedom, and, Section 5310 (aging and disabled populations) programs.
- Exploring expansion of transit using urbanized area Section 5307 funds.
- Determining future commuter rail service between Griffin and Atlanta.
- Adding regional express bus service connecting Spalding County to its surrounding communities, including Clayton, Henry and Coweta Counties and the City of Atlanta.
- Adding bus service to connect the Atlanta Motor Speedway, downtown Griffin, and a new park and ride lot.
- Developing a core fixed-route transit service serving Griffin, the Hospital, employment centers, and the US 19/41 and SR 92 commercial corridors.

2024 Spalding County Comprehensive Plan

Report Purpose

The *2024 Spalding County Comprehensive Plan* serves as the comprehensive land use and development plan to meet the requirements of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as approved by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Elements included in the plan include population, economic development, housing, natural and cultural resources, community facilities and services, land use, intergovernmental coordination, and transportation. The Comprehensive Plan establishes a Short Term Work Program and Future Land Use Map.

Geographic Focus

Spalding County and Cities of Orchard Hill and Sunnyside

Summary of Transit Recommendations

At the time the Comprehensive Plan was developed, no transit services were operating in the County. The Plan recommended developing commuter rail service between the City of Griffin, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and the City of Atlanta.

Spalding County Rural Transit Development Plan

Report Purpose

The *Spalding County Rural Transit Development Plan* provided an overview of existing rural transit service in Spalding County and the City of Griffin in 2007 administered by the McIntosh Trail Regional Development Center (MTRDC). The report summarized current operating conditions and examined the need for additional services through 2012. The services offered in 2007 were a demand-responsive rural area service focusing on the transportation needs of the senior population, workforce population, and disabled persons. At the time, the MTRDC service operated a rural transit service in a five-county region

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which also included Butts, Lamar, Pike, and Upson Counties. The study discussed the potential of expansion of other transit services within the County including fixed-route transit, commuter rail, express bus services, and vanpools.

Geographic Focus

Spalding County and City of Griffin

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The Development Plan determined that an urban fixed-route transit service was infeasible between the village nodes in Spalding; however, the report suggested that a subscription-type service and route could be feasible if it focused on areas with high concentrations on senior and transit dependent populations. The Plan established short-term goals and objectives through 2012 that focused on increasing operating efficiencies, expanding services, improving service marketing, and meeting Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) service requirements and performance standards. It was noted that the current fleet offering services within the County may need to expand by one or two vehicles from the five that were in operation in 2008.

City of Griffin Comprehensive Transportation Plan, April 2011

Report Purpose

The *Griffin Comprehensive Transportation Plan (GCTP)* was a comprehensive, multimodal plan that provided a long-range plan for transportation investments through 2030 for the City of Griffin. The GCTP was coordinated with the SCCTP. The Plan examined existing conditions and future needs, developed a blueprint for future transportation improvements and developed a comprehensive list of projects to be reviewed every five years.

Geographic Focus

City of Griffin

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The GCTP reiterated the need for the rural demand response service to improve operation efficiencies through technology investment and resource sharing among the regional commissions. To support a future Macon to Atlanta commuter rail line, the City of Griffin selected a site in downtown Griffin between Broad Street and the railroad tracks west of 6th Street for a future commuter rail station. The lot is city-owned and is currently used as a surface parking lot. The location would allow construction of a future structured parking behind the Spalding County Courthouse Annex to support the station.

City of Griffin 2014-2034 Comprehensive Plan

Report Purpose

The *Griffin 2014-2034 Comprehensive Plan* serves as the comprehensive land use and development plan to meet the requirements of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as approved by the DCA. The Comprehensive Plan contains the required elements of the latest DCA regulations: Community Goal, Needs and Opportunities, and Community Work Program.

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Geographic Focus

City of Griffin

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The transit recommendations contained within the Comprehensive Plan are the same as those advanced in the *Griffin Comprehensive Transportation Plan*.

West Griffin Activity Center Livable Centers Initiative Study

Report Purpose

The *West Griffin Activity Center LCI Study* focused on creating an economic activity center and Campus Gateway around the North Expressway US 19/41 corridor. This area includes the University of Georgia-Griffin Campus and the Griffin Technical College. Elements of the LCI included developing a Master Plan to create a new town center and a redevelopment plan to create a Tax Allocation District (TAD).

Geographic Focus

Area around North Expressway corridor between US 19/41 on the west, Experiment Street on the east, and SR 16 on the south within the City of Griffin

Summary of Transit Recommendations

Project recommendations from the *West Griffin Activity Center LCI* focus on roadway operational improvements, access management, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure for the study area. The study noted there was continued interest in Commuter Rail service between Griffin and Atlanta. The proposed redesign of Experiment Street would add a landscaped median and multiuse trail. The report noted that improvements along Experiment Street would support multimodal access from the West Griffin node to downtown to connect to a future Commuter Rail station.

Griffin Town Center Livable Centers Initiative Study

Report Purpose

The *Griffin Town Center LCI Study* focused on the downtown Griffin Central Business District and Historic Downtown Commercial District. The study examined the location for future transit and commuter rail stops, parking, housing, and multimodal transportation infrastructure to increase Griffin's identity and sense of place.

Geographic Focus

Downtown City of Griffin business and historic district

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The *Griffin Town Center LCI Study* identified major corridors for operational improvements as well as promoted policies for access management, street connectivity, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure. Transit recommendations included:

- Implementing commuter rail between the Cities of Griffin and Atlanta (T-10, T-11).
- Conducting a site study to determine the best location for a commuter rail station (T-12).

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- Evaluating the potential to reuse the Roosevelt Railroad corridor for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit access.
- Initiating a transit shuttle service during peak travel times between downtown and major destinations including the hospital, Sun City Peachtree community, and the University of Georgia campus (T-13).

Concept 3 Regional Transit Plan

Report Purpose

The *Concept 3 Regional Transit Plan* was undertaken by the Regional Transit Planning Board (TPB) and multiagency and jurisdiction partnership to develop a region-wide transit system. The plan serves as both the short and long-range transit vision for a 14-county metropolitan Atlanta region that includes Spalding County. The Concept 3 vision was adopted in 2008 and is the transit element of the ARC's adopted Plan204 RTP.

Geographic Focus

Fourteen counties within the Atlanta metropolitan planning area: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding, Rockdale, and Spalding counties

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The Concept 3 plan includes the following transit recommendations for Griffin and Spalding County:

- All-day commuter rail service between Griffin and Atlanta with future extension to Athens
- Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service between Griffin and the Southern Crescent Transit Center
- East-west arterial express bus service along the SR 16 corridor between Newnan and Griffin and from Griffin to McDonough

Tara Boulevard-US 19/41 Multimodal Corridor Study

Report Purpose

The *Tara Boulevard-US 19/41 Multimodal Corridor Study* was a multi-jurisdictional and multimodal corridor study that focused on the Tara Boulevard-US 19/41 corridor and adjacent communities extending from SR 16 in Griffin to I-75 in Clayton County. The Study evaluated land use and transportation strategies and alternatives to improve overall corridor mobility, safety, connectivity, and accessibility.

Geographic Focus

22.5 mile Tara Boulevard-US 19/41 corridor between SR 16 in Griffin to I-75 in Clayton County and including ¼-mile land area around the corridor

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The transit recommendations from the Study focused on improving local bus services and routes as well as adding express bus services along the corridor. However, none of the transit recommendations extended into Spalding County.

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Southern Regional Accessibility Study

Report Purpose

The *Southern Regional Accessibility Study* (SRAS) evaluated multimodal transportation needs across the south metropolitan Atlanta area and considered various growth and development scenarios to establish recommendations. The ARC adopted SRAS in September 2007, and the Study provides transit, roadway expansion and operations, management, bicycle, and pedestrian investment recommendations. Recommended projects were divided into three improvement phases: short-term through 2015, mid-term 2016-2025, and long-term 2026-2035.

Geographic Focus

Southern suburban metro Atlanta area including Clayton, Henry, Spalding, Fayette, Coweta Counties and a portion of South Fulton County

Summary of Transit Recommendations

SRAS transit recommendations include commuter bus service between cities, extension of commuter rail service to Griffin, and extension of the MARTA heavy rail to the proposed Southern Crescent Station. Specific transit recommendations for Spalding County included:

- Commuter rail extension to Griffin (T1)
- New commuter rail station in Griffin (T2)
- Local circulatory buses in Griffin (T40)
- Local bus service on SR 155 between Griffin and McDonough (T41)
- Local bus service on US 19/41 between Griffin and Lovejoy (T43)
- New local bus station in Griffin (T56)

North Hill Street Master Plan

Report Purpose

The *North Hill Street Master Plan* was an ARC Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) supplemental study to focus on land use, market, and transportation needs and opportunities along a corridor linking the City of Griffin north to Sun City Peachtree development in north Spalding County. The Plan examined the feasibility of implementing a Tax Allocation District (TAD) within the corridor area.

Geographic Focus

The North Hill Street corridor and immediately surrounding area extending from West Broad Street/SR 155 to Dobbins Mill Road

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The study recommended roadway, intersection, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements and did not include recommendations for transit.

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Roosevelt Railroad Rail-with-Trail Multi-use Study

Report Purpose

The *Roosevelt Railroad Rail-with-Trail Multi-use Study* reviewed the former Southern Railway corridor to identify the feasibility of creating a shared-use trail facility combined with a recreational rail service. The study evaluated land use and urban design to create a Master Plan for the corridor to include roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

Geographic Focus

The Roosevelt Railroad corridor extending from the City of Griffin to northeast Spalding County

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The Study recommended using the existing rail line for future transit service between Bleachery Street in Griffin to Teamon Road in northeast Spalding County, contingent on the build-out of Sun City Peachtree, Heron Bay Village, Big Pine Farm, adjacent subdivisions and planned village nodes. In addition, a connecting bus or shuttle service was recommended to connect from the downtown terminus at Bleachery Street to other destinations.

Tri-County Crossing Livable Centers Initiative Study

Report Purpose

The *Tri-County Crossing Livable Centers Initiative Study* focused attention on a crossroads between Spalding, Lamar, and Pike counties where they converge at US 19, US 41, and SR 155.

Geographic Focus

South Spalding County at the Pike and Lamar County boundary and centered around the Highway 41 and Zebulon Road intersection

Summary of Transit Recommendations

The *Tri-County Crossing LCI Study* contained no recommendations for transit. The focus of the transportation recommendations was to provide street connectivity as the area develops.

APPENDIX B: Public Meeting and Workshop Summary

Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study

Public Meeting and Community Workshop #1

Spalding County Annex, Meeting Room 108 | 119 E. Solomon Street | Griffin, GA

Tuesday, November 12, 2013 (6:00pm to 8:00pm)

Meeting Format

The meeting combined an open house where attendees were welcome to look at the study area map displays relative to the project and identify destination locations on the map. The project consultant team gave two identical formal presentations, the first at 6:30 pm and then again at 7:30 pm.

A welcome table was setup in the meeting room. Attendees received a project fact sheet, community survey, and comment sheet where they could provide additional comments for the project team's consideration. A total of 23 individuals signed in; however, not everyone signed in and total participants were estimated to be over 30 citizens.

Meeting Summary

Anthony Dukes, Griffin-Spalding Project Manager, opened the meeting and welcomed the group. He introduced Chip Burger, Project Manager with URS, who introduced the rest of the project team in attendance and gave an overview of the meeting.

Chip explained that the purpose of this meeting is to inform and listen to the public. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the feasibility of a transit system within the Griffin-Spalding service area to improve mobility, relieve/prevent traffic congestion, reduce pollution, and contribute to economic development. Throughout the study process, the project consultant team will collaborate with the community to understand the needs, identify potential transit destination, evaluate the feasibility of different types of transit, and make recommendations.

Chip discussed typical reasons to implement transit service and provided an overview in developing the conceptual design of the transit service, including route alignment, service days and hours, and target ridership markets and destinations. He also summarized the existing conditions of existing services (Three Rivers Regional transit services and taxi services), population, and demographic characteristics in the area. The tasks and schedule and project schedule were shown, with milestones highlighted where a final project report and presentation will be completed in June 2014.

Inga Kennedy, Outreach Consultant with PEQ, discussed the outreach process, which will include more than public meetings and stakeholder interviews. She encouraged everyone to complete the survey and asked for additional locations where information can be distributed (and the survey can be conducted on-site) in the study area to reach the community. These locations included the library, senior center, the Food Depot, churches, festivals, organizations, and the UGA-Griffin campus.

Chip stated the next steps in the project are to summarize and consider the public input; conduct a review of recent area transportation initiatives; develop, evaluate, and refine conceptual transit service alternatives, and present the findings at the future public information meeting. He also encouraged the attendees to visit the project website and participate in the online community survey.

After the each formal presentation, the floor was opened to questions from attendees. Anthony thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged them to spread the word in the community and visit the project website.

The following summarizes the questions received and answers provided:

Questions/Comments

Q: How do you see the transit system utilized? Interregional connectivity is important but how do you do it?

A: It could provide access to GRTA Park-N-Ride, Atlanta, jobs. Need funding sources (FTA, local funds, etc.) for transit system, but will be based on the type of system the community wants and will support and what recommendations are developed from the study. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is currently studying sub-regional transportation options.

Q: We haven't really talked about cost. How much will this cost?

A: No amount has been estimated since we are still very early in the process. However, a survey question is asked to assess how much the community is willing to pay for fare and ridership projections. More information on costs will come later in the process.

Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study

Public Meeting and Community Workshop #2

**Spalding County Annex, Meeting Room 108 | 119 E. Solomon Street | Griffin, GA
Thursday, February 20, 2014 (6:00pm to 8:00pm)**

Meeting Format

The meeting combined an open house where attendees were welcome to look at the study area map displays of major commute trips within and outside of the county, followed by a presentation by the project consultant team, then an interactive mapping exercise.

A welcome table was setup in the meeting room. Attendees received a project fact sheet, community survey, and comment sheet where they could provide additional comments for the project team's consideration. A total of 40 individuals signed attended the meeting.

Meeting Summary

Chip Burger, URS Project Manager, opened the meeting and welcomed the group. He introduced the rest of the project team in attendance and gave an overview of the meeting.

Chip explained that the purpose of this meeting is to identify the feasibility for and design of a public transit system for Griffin-Spalding County. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the feasibility of a transit system within the Griffin-Spalding service area to improve mobility, relieve/prevent traffic congestion, reduce pollution, and contribute to economic development. Throughout the study process, the project consultant team will collaborate with the community to understand the needs, identify potential transit markets, evaluate the feasibility of various transit modes, and make recommendations.

Chip discussed the process of evaluating the existing conditions of the study area which included reviewing relevant plans and studies, analyzing socioeconomic data, identifying travel patterns, and reviewing existing mobility services. The transit target market index map showed the range of areas in the Griffin-Spalding County with the lowest to highest amounts of transit propensity. Additional maps showed major commute trips within and outside of the County. He also summarized the existing conditions of existing services (Three Rivers Regional transit services and taxi services).

A needs assessment was also conducted and Chip provided a summary of the various methods used to identify potential transit markets: citizen surveys, outreach to key organizations, stakeholder interviews, field surveys, and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) Travel Demand Model. He then presented the preliminary results of the citizen survey. As of the meeting date, a total of 207 surveys had been received, 155 online and 52 hardcopy.

After the presentation, the floor was opened to questions from attendees. The following summarizes the questions received and answers provided:

Questions/Comments

Q: Census Tracts 1603, 1604, and 1610 are high density, low-income neighborhoods. Could the fact that there is no public transportation be impacting their ability to get to work?

A: The dark tracts on the maps receive the most trips. If there was public transportation, then it could help the residents in those lower-income tracts reach these destinations.

Q: Are we asking the question in the right context regarding if “important to you” to have public transit or should it be asked “important to your community”?

A: The survey was just one tool to obtain community input. Additional tools, i.e. community leaders, will be used as well.

Q: Are there any communities in the region similar to the size of Griffin-Spalding that have a public transit system?

A: Carrollton has studied it; Gainesville and Hinesville have implemented transit systems.

Q: Is the success of a Griffin-Spalding transit system contingent on the support of adjacent counties?

A: Not necessarily, but it could help with Park-and-Ride lots, etc.

Q: I currently do not own a vehicle and would like to see a bus service in Griffin. I currently take a taxi to medical appointments and it can be costly.

A: We are currently reviewing and analyzing the public input to determine what is feasible for the Griffin-Spalding area.

Q: What if you do not have access to a vehicle?

A: If you do not currently own or have access to a vehicle, then you are likely interested in public transportation.

Q: Going forward, we need to be intentional about how we frame the discussion of public transportation. We need to show the benefits to everyone beyond those who are in the lower income census tracts.

A: Public transportation is for everyone – low income, elderly, choice riders, etc.

Q: Have you reached out to employers who want to locate to the area and does the study consider economic growth?

A: The study will consider what transportation options are feasible for the area.

Q: I will use the public transportation if the fare is cost saving to using personal vehicle and if there is adequate logistic coordination with other transit to my destination. We need an overall regional comprehensive transportation plan.

Chip stated the next steps in the project are to summarize and consider the public input; continue survey activities; develop, evaluate, and refine conceptual transit service alternatives; and present findings at a future public information meeting. He also encouraged the attendees to visit the project website. Meeting attendees were then asked to participate in an interactive mapping exercise to graphically show needs and desired connections to destinations, locally and regionally. Chip thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged attendees to complete a comment form.

Comments Received at Public Meeting

1. Bring Xpress bus service to Spalding to enable people access to jobs in other areas of Metro Atlanta.
2. Why does Spalding need local public transportation? Clayton County closed theirs due to inability to afford it.
3. If local public transportation is provided, will it link to Xpress bus service in Hampton or McDonough?

APPENDIX C: Stakeholder Committee Meeting Summary

Wednesday, September 25, 2013

Anthony Dukes introduced Chip Burger & the URS Team, the consulting group hired to conduct the Transit Feasibility Study. Mr. Burger noted that the purpose of the study was to evaluate the feasibility of a transit system within the Griffin-Spalding service area to improve mobility for employees, residents, and visitors of the service area, relieve/prevent traffic congestion, reduce pollution and contribution to economic development. Mr. Burger noted that implementation of the study will improve access between activity centers and other destinations, facilitate trips over multiple destinations, avoid congested roadways, obtain environmental benefits and establish a new and attractive community mobility alternative. According to the scope of the Feasibility Study, they will begin to conduct initial public involvement meetings, perform review of recent area transportation initiatives, conduct stakeholder interviews, develop, evaluate, and refine conceptual transit service alternatives. At such time, he will present his findings to G-SATC, noted Mr. Burger. Commissioner Hollberg requested that Mr. Burger also speak with the Downtown Development Authority.

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Anthony Dukes stated the City of Griffin and Spalding County has a jointly funded Transit Feasibility Study for the amount of local match with 80% Federal funding from ARC and the Federal Transit Authority Administration. Mr. Dukes stated URS has been selected to conduct the Transit Feasibility Study. Our first public meeting was held on November 12th.

Mr. Dukes introduced Chip Burger, the Project Manager for URS. Mr. Burger stated there are several items under recent activities:

- Submitted Public Involvement Plan to G-S planning staff
- Prepared project fact sheet (use as handout for meeting)
- Created project website
- Prepared survey to gather community input on transit
 - Hosted on surveymonkey site
 - Printed and distributed the survey forms throughout the community
 - Posted on project website
- Developed stakeholder list and interview questions
- Prepared notices and other materials for public meeting and workshop held on Tuesday, November 12
- Distributed notices through:
 - Newspaper ad
 - Email lists
 - Project website
 - Libraries, government buildings, utilities, churches
 - Selected mailings
 - Reminder telephone calls
- Conducted public meeting and workshop on Tuesday, November 12:
 - Over 30 attendees
 - Open house setting with formal presentation and significant opportunity for discussion
 - Attendees participated in origin/destination workshop activity
 - PowerPoint presentation given on the study purpose, typical reasons for implementing transit service, overview of existing conditions in service area, project schedule and next steps
- Initiated stakeholder interviews

Mr. Burger stated there was a lot of interest at the first public meeting and the initial survey showed a lot of interest as well. Interest in exactly what form will be determined from the survey. Transportation could provide commuter base services, GRETA, park and ride lot to the north or a route through town which could deviate off route and pickup within a 3/4 mile buffer. Mr. Morrow inquired if a link would be available of the survey. It was noted that a PDF version will be available.

Mr. Burger stated our phase of the project is more existing conditions. The next phase will be the needs assessment which will go into exactly what people are looking for and what their vision of transit is. Michelle Cannon inquired as to what type of feedback has been received. Mr. Burger stated maybe 100 or so had responded to the survey. Discussion was held further on feedback. Mr. Burger stated under Project Schedule and Budget, they are on schedule and on budget.

Wednesday, January 15, 2014

Mr. Burger stated that the Transit feasibility study started the New Year off with a bang. URS had a public outreach session in the Customer Service Lobby of City Hall on Friday, January 23rd, where they greeted people as they came in to pay their bills. The meeting was an open house setting where customers could talk to representatives about the Transit Feasibility Study and they distributed over 200 fact sheets about the project. During that Open House they collected over 50 of the surveys that were given out. URS is about 50% complete with the stake holder interviews. They have almost 200 completed surveys collected so far. On Thursday, January 30, at 6 pm URS will hold another public meeting in the Board Room at the City Hall.

URS will continue our community outreach activities. The project is on schedule and is on budget. URS has completed preliminary summaries on the survey, but they are going to continue to receive the surveys.

Wednesday, March 19, 2014

Mr. Burger gave a brief update on the Transit Feasibility study stating that the Existing Conditions Analysis Effort has been finalized. Those findings were presented at the public meeting held on February 20th. We had a good response from the people who attended the meeting. We are in the process of documenting our findings and preparing our initial recommendations. We have updated and continue to monitor the project website. We have almost completed our stakeholder interviews, so if there is anyone who hasn't been contacted and would like to have input, please let us know. We are also in the process of wrapping up our on-line survey efforts. We feel that we have gotten all of the information that we can out of the on-line survey.

Mr. Burger stated that he has reached out to Kenyata Smiley at the ARC, because prior to leaving Anthony had mentioned that he had been accruing 5307 funds. He wanted to check the status of the account and what kind of funds had accrued. There appears to be two accounts: One contains funds accrued through FY2012 in the amount of approximately \$460,000. The second is funds accrued from FY2013 forward in the amount of approximately \$150,000. These funds can be used for items like purchasing capital equipment for example buses and they can also be used for transit facilities. The funds can be used for preventive maintenance and can be used to contract out the service to a company who provides transit service. I just wanted to give you an idea of what is available through the Federal Funds Process.

The group expressed concern over accepting federal funds for a project and what would happen if the project simply wasn't working out like they had planned. What would be the expectations of the federal government if something like this happens? Mr. Burger agreed that is a consideration because Clayton County ran into that problem when they decided to end their service. Kenya Smiley with the ARC stated that this is part of the reason for the Transit Feasibility Study. There are ways to transfer those assets or sell those assets off to reduce the cost or any liability to the County. Any time you use federal dollars there are requirements that come along with them. Before you are even allowed to start the project, you would have to have a 5 year operations plan. The plan would have to show how you could sustain a service for at least 4 to 5 years before it could be approved to use those dollars. There would have to be a plan in place and that plan would have to include a contingency for just what you are talking about. FTA works very closely with those who apply for funds. Costing the plan up front, realizing what it may or may not be if the buy in is not there, and then having a contingency plan in place, would really put you in a good position to do what you need to do with regard to 5307 funding. There are creative ways to reallocate assets and the obligation associated with those assets.

Wednesday, May 21, 2014

Mr. Burger gave a brief update on the Transit Feasibility Study - we did have a public meeting on April 17 and at that meeting we presented the following recommendations:

- Expanding and better promoting the current car pool and van pool systems that already exist. This service is already available on line to pair up individuals who are interested in car pools and van pools.
- To expand the Three Rivers system that is already operating within the County. There are currently five (5) vans operating within Spalding County.
- To focus more on the urbanized area of the county developing a flex route service with the ultimate goal of establishing a fixed route system with more structure for an urbanized route.

These recommendations have been well received and since the meeting we have started working on the Transit System Plan task and the Implementation Plan. Elements of those tasks are:

- The operating and maintenance costs.
- Funding sources including MAP21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century). This is an updated federal program that consolidated several different sources of funding. With the consolidation some of the rules have changed which reflects favorably for this area of the State.
- Development of a Financing Plan and incorporation of a high level of implementation.

We will be holding another Public Meeting on Tuesday, June 10th, at 6:00 p.m. in the Courthouse Annex, Room 108, to present the findings from the Transit System Plan and the Implementation Plan tasks. We will be advertising this meeting and it is already posted on the website.

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Public Information and Workshop Meeting Summaries

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The following summarizes the questions received and answers provided:

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Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study

Public Meeting and Community Workshop #2

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Thursday, February 20, 2014 (6:00pm to 8:00pm)

Meeting Format

The meeting combined an open house where attendees were welcome to look at the study area map displays of major commute trips within and outside of the county, followed by a presentation by the project consultant team, then an interactive mapping exercise.

A welcome table was setup in the meeting room. Attendees received a project fact sheet, community survey, and comment sheet where they could provide additional comments for the project team's consideration. A total of 40 individuals signed attended the meeting.

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Chip explained that the purpose of this meeting is to identify the feasibility for and design of a public transit system for Griffin-Spalding County. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the feasibility of a transit system within the Griffin-Spalding service area to improve mobility, relieve/prevent traffic congestion, reduce pollution, and contribute to economic development. Throughout the study process, the project consultant team will collaborate with the community to understand the needs, identify potential transit markets, evaluate the feasibility of various transit modes, and make recommendations.

Chip discussed the process of evaluating the existing conditions of the study area which included reviewing relevant plans and studies, analyzing socioeconomic data, identifying travel patterns, and reviewing existing mobility services. The transit target market index map showed the range of areas in the Griffin-Spalding County with the lowest to highest amounts of transit propensity. Additional maps showed major commute trips within and outside of the County. He also summarized the existing conditions of existing services (Three Rivers Regional transit services and taxi services).

A needs assessment was also conducted and Chip provided a summary of the various methods used to identify potential transit markets: citizen surveys, outreach to key organizations, stakeholder interviews, field surveys, and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) Travel Demand Model. He then presented the preliminary results of the citizen survey. As of the meeting date, a total of 207 surveys had been received, 155 online and 52 hardcopy.

After the presentation, the floor was opened to questions from attendees. The following summarizes the questions received and answers provided:

Questions/Comments

Q: Census Tracts 1603, 1604, and 1610 are high density, low-income neighborhoods. Could the fact that there is no public transportation be impacting their ability to get to work?

A: The dark tracts on the maps receive the most trips. If there was public transportation, then it could help the residents in those lower-income tracts reach these destinations.

Q: Are we asking the question in the right context regarding if “important to you” to have public transit or should it be asked “important to your community”?

A: The survey was just one tool to obtain community input. Additional tools, i.e. community leaders, will be used as well.

Q: Are there any communities in the region similar to the size of Griffin-Spalding that have a public transit system?

A: Carrollton has studied it; Gainesville and Hinesville have implemented transit systems.

Q: Is the success of a Griffin-Spalding transit system contingent on the support of adjacent counties?

A: Not necessarily, but it could help with Park-and-Ride lots, etc.

Q: I currently do not own a vehicle and would like to see a bus service in Griffin. I currently take a taxi to medical appointments and it can be costly.

A: We are currently reviewing and analyzing the public input to determine what is feasible for the Griffin-Spalding area.

Q: What if you do not have access to a vehicle?

A: If you do not currently own or have access to a vehicle, then you are likely interested in public transportation.

Q: Going forward, we need to be intentional about how we frame the discussion of public transportation. We need to show the benefits to everyone beyond those who are in the lower income census tracts.

A: Public transportation is for everyone – low income, elderly, choice riders, etc.

Q: Have you reached out to employers who want to locate to the area and does the study consider economic growth?

A: The study will consider what transportation options are feasible for the area.

Q: I will use the public transportation if the fare is cost saving to using personal vehicle and if there is adequate logistic coordination with other transit to my destination. We need an overall regional comprehensive transportation plan.

Chip stated the next steps in the project are to summarize and consider the public input; continue survey activities; develop, evaluate, and refine conceptual transit service alternatives; and present findings at a future public information meeting. He also encouraged the attendees to visit the project website. Meeting attendees were then asked to participate in an interactive mapping exercise to graphically show needs and desired connections to destinations, locally and regionally. Chip thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged attendees to complete a comment form.

Comments Received at Public Meeting

4. Bring Xpress bus service to Spalding to enable people access to jobs in other areas of Metro Atlanta.
5. Why does Spalding need local public transportation? Clayton County closed theirs due to inability to afford it.
6. If local public transportation is provided, will it link to Xpress bus service in Hampton or McDonough?

Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study

Public Meeting and Community Workshop #3

Spalding County Annex, Meeting Room 108 | 119 E. Solomon Street | Griffin, GA

Thursday, April 17, 2014 (6:00pm to 7:30pm)

Meeting Format

The meeting was conducted in a town hall format and 15 minutes prior to the start of the presentation, attendees were encouraged to review display boards containing illustrations of preliminary recommendations.

A welcome table was setup in the meeting room. Attendees received a project fact sheet and comment form where they could provide additional comments for the project team's consideration.

Meeting Summary

Chip Burger, Project Manager with URS, opened the meeting, introduced the rest of the project team in attendance and gave an overview of the meeting.

Chip explained that the purpose of this meeting is to introduce preliminary recommendations for a transit system for Griffin-Spalding County. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the feasibility of a transit system within the Griffin-Spalding service area to improve mobility, relieve/prevent traffic congestion, reduce pollution, and contribute to economic development. He gave a brief overview of the history of the study process to date, which has included two previous public meetings.

Chip walked through each of the preliminary recommendations which included details of how each could operate.

After the presentation, the floor was opened to questions and comments from attendees.

Questions/Comments

C: Include routes that run near City Hall, County Courthouse and Hope Health Clinic. All of these have very heavy traffic during week days.

C: Prefer the fixed route recommendation. It should also be looped to include the Post Office, DFACS and other government offices.

C: Do not replace the current service provided by Three Rivers.

Q: Where does On-Call service work well? Should provide some examples from other areas.

Q: What is the time frame for implementation? If On-Call service is provided, it could take a couple of years and if Fixed-Route, could take several years.

C: The process should also include promoting the existing Georgia Commute program.

Q: How will a new service be promoted? The process will include a separate Marketing Plan to ensure broad awareness.

C: We like the activity centers that are identified for service/routes.

**Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study
Public Meeting and Community Workshop #4
Spalding County Annex, Meeting Room 108 | 119 E. Solomon Street | Griffin, GA
Tuesday, June 10, 2014 (6:00pm to 7:30pm)**

Meeting Format

The meeting was conducted in a town hall format and 15 minutes prior to the start of the presentation, attendees were encouraged to review display boards containing illustrations of the project recommendations.

A welcome table was setup in the meeting room. Attendees received a project fact sheet and comment form where they could provide additional comments for the project team's consideration.

Meeting Summary

Chip Burger, Project Manager with URS, opened the meeting, introduced the rest of the project team in attendance and gave an overview of the meeting.

Chip explained that the purpose of this meeting is to introduce present recommendations and cost estimates for a transit system for Griffin-Spalding County. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the feasibility of a transit system within the Griffin-Spalding service area to improve mobility, relieve/prevent traffic congestion, reduce pollution, and contribute to economic development. He gave a brief overview of the history of the study process to date, which has included three previous public meetings.

Chip walked through each of the recommendations which included details of how each could operate. He also discussed estimated costs for each recommendation.

After the presentation, the floor was opened to questions and comments from attendees.

Questions/Comments

C: Recommendations should also include areas outside of Griffin.

C: Describe how the funding will be split. The Federal process is restrictive.

STUDY OVERVIEW

Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study

<http://www.griffin-spaldingtransitfeasibilitystudy.com/>
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Griffin-SpaldingTransitFeasibilityStudy>



Study Purpose

The City of Griffin and Spalding County have initiated a Transit Feasibility Study to determine the need, the most appropriate type of services, and the associated requirements for providing public transit service. This study will identify and design transit alternatives that will take into account the varied needs of the area's increasingly diversified population and employment markets and support the Griffin-Spalding commitment to enhancing mobility options.

The Griffin-Spalding area has grown by more than nine percent since 2000. In the event Federal transit funding might be realized due to the area's growing population, Griffin-Spalding, through this study, will be prepared with a comprehensive understanding of its transit needs and options for proceeding towards immediate implementation.

Project Elements

Key study components include:

- Reviewing relevant area studies and collect additional data as required;
- Assessing transit needs and identifying potential transit markets;
- Evaluating and selecting the most promising transit alternatives for implementation;
- Developing appropriate transit service and system alternatives;
- Conducting innovative public and agency outreach activities;
- Preparing a multi-element short- and long-term implementation plan; and
- Ensuring continual and timely coordination with the Griffin-Spalding planning staff.

Tasks

Throughout the study process, **Project Coordination** will occur and the study protocol and management approach will be established. Coordination with the Stakeholder Committee will also be conducted.

The study is comprised of seven major tasks and has a ten-month schedule. Community involvement activities will be conducted under **Task 1, Stakeholder and Community Involvement**. A variety of outreach methods, including public meetings and workshops, are planned as part of this task.

In **Task 2, Inventory of Existing Conditions**, activities include identifying and collecting required data, reviewing existing plans and studies, and assessing potential transit markets. **Task 3, Assessment of Current and Future Needs**, will involve developing potential transit alternatives. Alternatives will be screened and the most promising alternatives will be evaluated in **Task 4, Recommendations**. In **Task 5, the Transit System Plan**, will be developed.

Task 6, Implementation Plan, will result in a phased, implementation program of recommended services. Finally, All data, findings and results will be documented in **Task 7- Final Report**.

Schedule

TASK	TFS TASK DESCRIPTION	2013				2014					
		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
1	Public Participation and Local Meetings	[Task 1: Sep - Dec 2013]									
2	Inventory of Existing Conditions	[Task 2: Oct - Dec 2013]									
3	Assessment of Current and Future Needs	[Task 3: Nov - Feb 2014]									
4	Recommendations	[Task 4: Dec 2013 - Mar 2014]									
5	Prepare Transit System Plan	[Task 5: Jan - Mar 2014]									
6	Prepare Implementation Plan	[Task 6: Feb - May 2014]									
7	Final Report	[Task 7: May - Jun 2014]									



November 2013



Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study

When?

Tuesday,
November 12, 2013
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Where?

Spalding County
Annex,
Meeting Room 108
119 E. Solomon St.
Griffin, GA

You may drop by at
anytime between the
hours of 6:00 to 8:00 pm

6:00 – 7:00 pm Open House

7:00 – 8:00 pm Presentation
& Workshop

Your Opinion Matters!



Please Join Us for a Community Workshop

You are invited to participate in a study to identify the feasibility for and design of a public transit system for Griffin-Spalding County.

This meeting will include:

- ✓ Introduction of the Transit Study purpose and objectives
- ✓ Process for community involvement
- ✓ Opportunity for public input to identify destinations and help define routes and service types

To take the community survey, go to:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Griffin-SpaldingTransitFeasibilityStudy>

To stay informed about the Transit Feasibility Study, visit our web site at:
www.griffin-spaldingtransitfeasibilitystudy.com

Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study

When?

Thursday,
February 20, 2014
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Where?

Spalding County
Annex
Meeting Room 108
119 E. Solomon St.
Griffin, GA

You may drop by at
anytime between the
hours of 6:00 to 8:00 pm

6:00 – 6:30 pm Open House
6:30 – 7:00 pm Presentation
7:00 – 8:00 pm Workshop

Your Participation Matters!



Please Join Us for the Second Public Workshop

You are invited to participate in the second public workshop to identify the feasibility for and design of a public transit system for Griffin-Spalding County.

This workshop will include:

- ✓ Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Results
- ✓ Citizen Survey Results
- ✓ Interactive Mapping Exercises
- ✓ Next Steps in the Process

To take the community survey, go to:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Griffin-SpaldingTransitFeasibilityStudy>

To stay informed about the Transit Feasibility Study, visit our web site at:
www.griffin-spaldingtransitfeasibilitystudy.com

Griffin-Spalding Transit Feasibility Study

When?

Thursday,
April 17, 2014
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Where?

Spalding County
Annex
Meeting Room 108
119 E. Solomon St.
Griffin, GA



You're Invited



Please Join Us for an Important Meeting

You are invited to participate in the next meeting to identify the feasibility for and design of a public transit system for Griffin-Spalding County.

This meeting will include:

- ✓ Preliminary Recommendations
- ✓ Next Steps in the Process

To stay informed about the Transit Feasibility Study, visit our web site at:

www.griffin-spaldingtransitfeasibilitystudy.com

**Griffin-Spalding
Transit Feasibility
Study
Public Meeting**

When?

**Tuesday,
June 10, 2014
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm**

Where?

**Spalding County
Annex
Meeting Room 108
119 E. Solomon St.
Griffin, GA**



Voice Your Opinion!



**Please Join Us for this
Important Meeting**

You are invited to participate in this meeting to identify the feasibility for and design of a potential public transit system for Griffin-Spalding County.

This meeting will include:

- ✓ Final Recommendations
- ✓ Cost Estimates
- ✓ Next Steps in the Process

To stay informed about the Transit Feasibility Study, visit our web site at:

www.griffin-spaldingtransitfeasibilitystudy.com

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

APPENDIX D: Operating Statistics and Ridership Estimates

Estimated Fixed Route Service Costs Summary	
Annual Service Statistics	
Peak Vehicles	5
Fleet Vehicles ¹	7
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	10,200
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	224,500
Estimated Low Ridership²	91,800
Estimated Moderate Ridership	122,400
Estimated High Ridership	153,000
Annual O&M Cost³	\$612,000
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$60.00</i>

Notes:

1. Assumes five vehicles in service two spare vehicles
2. Low ridership assumes approximately 9 passengers per revenue hour;
Moderate ridership assumes 12 passengers per hour; and
High ridership assumes 15 passengers per revenue hour
3. O&M costs assumes \$60.00 operating cost per revenue hour

Route 1 - Gold

	Fixed Route
Annual Service Statistics	
Peak Vehicles	1
Fleet Vehicles	1
Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,040
Vehicle Revenue Miles	44,900
Estimated Low Ridership¹	18,360
Estimated Moderate Ridership	24,480
Estimated High Ridership	30,600
Annual O&M Cost²	\$122,400
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$60.00</i>

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Route 2 - Orange

	Fixed Route
<u>Annual Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	1
Fleet Vehicles	1
Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,040
Vehicle Revenue Miles	44,900
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	18,360
Estimated Moderate Ridership	24,480
Estimated High Ridership	30,600
Annual O&M Cost ²	\$122,400
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$60.00</i>

Route 3 - Blue

	Fixed Route
<u>Annual Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	1
Fleet Vehicles	1
Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,040
Vehicle Revenue Miles	44,900
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	18,360
Estimated Moderate Ridership	24,480
Estimated High Ridership	30,600
Annual O&M Cost ²	\$122,400
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$60.00</i>

GRIFFIN-SPALDING COUNTY TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Route 4 - Green

	Fixed Route
<u>Annual Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	1
Fleet Vehicles	1
Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,040
Vehicle Revenue Miles	44,900
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	18,360
Estimated Moderate Ridership	24,480
Estimated High Ridership	30,600
Annual O&M Cost ²	\$122,400
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$60.00</i>

Route 5 - Red

	Fixed Route
<u>Annual Service Statistics</u>	
Peak Vehicles	1
Fleet Vehicles	1
Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,040
Vehicle Revenue Miles	44,900
Estimated Low Ridership ¹	18,360
Estimated Moderate Ridership	24,480
Estimated High Ridership	30,600
Annual O&M Cost ²	\$122,400
<i>Estimated Cost per Revenue Hour</i>	<i>\$60.00</i>

APPENDIX E: Sample Ride Guide and Policies

Griffin-Spalding Transit operates Monday through Friday from approximately 6:15am-6:15pm. Service is not provided on weekends, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July Fourth, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, or Christmas Day. Public timetables are available on buses, the system website (bgtransit.org), or by calling customer information at 770-233-4130.

Buses will only stop at designated stops that are identified by signs at key locations along the routes. Please arrive at the bus stop three to five minutes prior to the scheduled time. Buses have lighted destination signs displaying the route name. If you cannot read the information, please ask the operator.

After the bus stops, enter through the front door, have your fare payment ready, and place it directly into the farebox. The current regular fare is \$1.25, and exact fare is required as operators cannot make change. Upon request to the operator, transfers to accommodate one continual system trip will be issued at no charge. Children under 48" tall are not required to pay the fare but must be accompanied by an older fare paying passenger. Half fare applies for persons with disabilities, students, and seniors (over 65 years of age); however, to qualify for half fare, a recognized identification card such as a student ID, transit issued ID, or a Medicare card must be presented upon boarding the bus.

To exit the bus, pull/press the cord/tape located along the windows which will activate the stop request for the operator. After you exit the bus, wait for the bus to depart before crossing the roadway. Do not cross in front of a bus unless you are at a traffic signal.

Buses are accessible and have wheelchair accommodations. The operator will provide assistance for securing wheelchairs. Front seats are designated for senior and disabled passengers.

Buses are equipped with bicycle racks and can be used as follows:

1. Bicycle racks are made available for use on a first-come, first-served basis and each bike rack carries two bikes.
2. Children 12 and younger must be accompanied by an adult to load and unload a bicycle.
3. For safety reasons, the bus operator cannot get off the bus to assist loading and unloading of bicycles. All passengers using the bicycle rack must be able to load and unload their bicycle without assistance.
4. The transit system is not responsible for loss or damages to bicycles on buses or transit system property.
5. Passengers are responsible for properly securing the bicycle before boarding the bus.

Passengers must be properly attired with shirt and shoes worn at all times.

The following items and/or activities are prohibited aboard buses:

- Distracting operator
- Weapons of any type
- Smoking

- Alcohol/controlled substances
- Littering
- Open food or drink
- Loud talking, sound devices without headphones, or profanity
- Pets/animals (except mobility aid animals for persons with disabilities)

Complementary paratransit service as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), is provided by special vans within ¼-mile of each route during the days and hours of regular route service. The service is available to persons with disabilities who cannot access or use the regular route buses. To use this service, customers must obtain certification through the paratransit eligibility process. For paratransit certification and reservations, please call 770-233-4130. The current one-way paratransit fare is \$2.50.

Should you experience a transit service problem regarding fares, employees, buses, or other issues, please call 770-233-4130 to report an incident.

APPENDIX F: Service Start-Up Element List

Task	Description
Preparation and submittal of operational plans	Plan draft prepared and reviewed Submittal to Project Team Revise plan Final Submittal
Bus Maintenance	Determine fixed route and paratransit vehicle types Procure vehicles Final delivery/inspection of transit vehicles Assign bus numbers Obtain titles and install license tags Install bike racks Install fareboxes Install destination signs Apply bus exterior graphics Determine fueling supplier/location/procedures
Bus Transportation	Operator recruiting Operator training Paratransit scheduling training Supervisor familiarization Service area familiarization/reservations, etc. Develop customer guide Paratransit eligibility certification process Prepare paratransit ID card Bus safety orientation Dispatch training Supervisor training Road call procedures Procure uniforms Procure computers and paratransit software
Radio Communications	Obtain hand-held units Obtain telephone system
Customer Service	Establish rider guide information/regulations Establish telephone and website information Conduct customer information training
Finance	Develop cost center(s), timesheets, etc. Develop monthly NTD and financial reporting Decide/procure fare media type(s) Legal and Risk Management Purchase/verify insurance

Task	Description
	Establish claims process
Marketing	Place service information on website Seek opportunities to publicize service Establish Media Coordination
Planning and Analysis	Commission approval of service Select bus stop/shelter locations Develop operator run assignments and schedules Design public timetables Obtain printed schedules Develop monthly revenue / performance reporting
System Identity	Determine system name Develop system logo System contact points Final bus stop design Final bus exterior graphics Final paratransit ID Final half fare permit and card
Facilities Maintenance	Procure bus stops, posts, hardware and shelters Receive and install bus stops and shelters
Initiate Service	Publicity/Ceremony