

Section 6: Transit System

Section 6.1 Current Regulations

The Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century, or TEA-21, emphasizes the importance of transit to local communities by providing flexibility in the financing of transit services. Urbanized areas may divert funds from roadway improvements in order to allocate additional funding to transit.

Section 6.2 Available Funding

The Section 5310 Program that is administered by the Georgia Department of Human Resources, or GDHR, makes federal funding available to social service providers for rural transit. Funding from this program is used to assist two non-profit transit providers serving Southeast Georgia, including Glynn County. The providers include Gateway Behavioral Health Services and Coastal Georgia Area Community Action Authority. These non-profit transit providers offer varying levels of service to the elderly and the mentally and physically disabled. Existing transit services are limited because they do not serve the transit dependent who are low income, under the age of 16, and visitors to Glynn County.

Transit funding is also available through the Federal Transit Administration, or FTA, through Section 5303 funds designated for transit planning activities, Section 5307 funds for urban transit programs, Section 5309 funds for capital needs, and Section 5311 funds for rural public transit. The Brunswick Area Transportation Study, or BATS, continues to assess the need for and the costs of implementing transit service in the urbanized area of Glynn County including the City of Brunswick and St. Simons Island.

Section 6.3 Existing Transportation Services

Within Glynn County, mass transit is not available. However, a number of transportation services are provided in Glynn County through a variety of public agencies and private organizations. The area transportation services include intercity bus service, human service transportation, and private transportation. These services are described below.

Section 6.3 (a) Greyhound Lines, Inc.

Greyhound provides intercity bus service operating from a station on Gloucester Street in Brunswick and links to other cities and towns in Georgia and the United States. Routes connecting to the Greyhound service network operate to/from Brunswick, Jesup, Savannah, and Jacksonville with a number of daily trips. Round trip fares are in the general price range of \$14.50 for service between Brunswick and Jesup, \$32.00 for service between Brunswick and Savannah, and \$34.50 between Brunswick and Jacksonville.

Section 6.3 (b) Human Services Transportation

Human Services Transportation refers to the transportation of clients of human and social service agencies. The service is typically provided for medical, educational, employment, or recreational needs. The clients frequently represent special groups such as seniors, the mentally and physically disabled and low-income residents. The services provided are varied and include physical and mental health services, aging programs, employment assistance, substance abuse programs, rehabilitation, training programs for the disabled, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TAN-F). Many programs are oriented to groups needing transit services including seniors, youth, and young adults, persons with disabilities, low-income, and unemployed residents. Agencies may provide or require transportation services for more than one population. Two such services include Gateway Behavioral Health Services (Gateway CSB) and the Coastal Georgia Area Community Action Authority.

Gateway Behavioral Health Services

The Gateway Center for Human Development provides demand-responsive and fixed route transit service to people with mental disabilities. In addition to Glynn County, the service area includes five rural counties (Bryan, Camden, Liberty, Long, and McIntosh) of Southeast Georgia.

The transit service operates seven days a week on a 24-hour basis, including holidays. Its fleet consists of various vans and trucks that range from being in excellent to poor condition. Brunswick is the central point of contact for scheduling, dispatch, and maintenance.

The transit service handles approximately 157,000 passenger trips per year. Gateway provides approximately 1,417,000 revenue miles of service per year. It partially coordinates its service with other similar transportation providers.

Coastal Georgia Area Community Action Authority

The Coastal Georgia Area Community Action Authority provides a demand-responsive transit service to rural Southeast Georgia including the following counties: Bryan, Camden, Evans, Glynn, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, Tattnall, and Wayne. Transit is available to the elderly and to people with mental and physical disabilities. Secondary service is provided to the agency's Head Start and Day Care programs. It also operates a Non-Emergency Medical Transportation program in Glynn County.

The service is available at least eight hours per day Monday through Friday. Hours of service can be extended for special functions and events. The agency provides transportation to the elderly for non-medical functions such as grocery shopping, banking, etc. There are three part-time and four full-time drivers for Glynn County. The agency owns a combination of buses, vans, and sedans.

The agency partially coordinates its service with other similar transportation providers. It has been working with other agencies in reference to program services, expanding needs, client referrals, case management, and the coordination of transit service.

Section 6.3 (c) Private Transportation

Private transportation includes specialized transportation including taxi and other services. Area taxi service is currently served by A-Taxi, Courtesy Cab, and Island Cab Service. Pre-arranged shuttle service to and from various airports in Brunswick, Savannah, and Jacksonville and other destinations such as Jesup AMTRAK station are provided by Golden Isles Shuttle, Max Transport, and Advantage Limo.

Bernie's Transportation provides subscription transportation service, primarily for work-related trips. Golden Isles Touring Company and national firms in Savannah and Jacksonville provide charter/tour bus service. St. Simons Transit Company provides land and water charter/tour services, and the St. Simons Trolley offers daily scheduled island tours.

Section 6.4 Public Transit Planning

The consulting firm of Day Wilburn Associates, Inc. completed the Brunswick/Glynn Transit Needs and Opportunities Study in December 2004. The following goals were developed for the study:

- Improve the existing transportation system through innovative multimodal alternatives
- Stimulate economic growth and improve access to employment, educational, medical, and retail centers
- Promote improved transportation for underserved population groups
- Reduce environmental impacts associated with energy consumption, congestion, and air quality

The study evaluated local population densities, growth trends, populations typically needing transit service, travel patterns, socioeconomic data, and key activity centers to determine the potential transit service that would best serve the local needs. In addition to a data review, community representatives, major employers, human service agencies, and existing transportation providers were interviewed and focus groups and surveys were conducted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the local needs.

A number of transit service alternatives were assessed for feasibility within the local area. These services included carpooling/vanpooling, demand response, fixed route, shuttle circulator, subsidized taxi, and special services. The study revealed that transit service needs do exist in Brunswick/Glynn County and fixed route service in the more developed areas (primarily Brunswick and St. Simons Island) and a rideshare program are the most feasible for implementation. The study also revealed that consideration should be given to future services including a demand response program for rural portions of Glynn County including Jekyll Island and the developing Steamboat City area.

The recommended initial services are a fixed route transit service and a rideshare program. Fixed route service within the Brunswick/Glynn urbanized area was identified as the most feasible for implementation. The recommended four-route fixed-route service is illustrated in Figure 6-1 and includes the routes described below. The corresponding service parameters including estimated operating costs are included in Table 6-1. The Implementation Plan and corresponding Transit Service Financial Plan are outlined in Tables 6-2, 6-3, and 6-4.

Route 1 – Downtown/Altama Connector

Service would be provided on a 30 minute frequency and operate between downtown Brunswick and the Golden Isles Parkway/mall area on weekdays and Saturdays with service extended to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center on Saturdays.

Route 2A – Downtown/I-95-US 341

Service would be provided primarily for employment trips on weekdays during early morning and afternoon periods. Service would be linked to key employer shift times and would be provided on a 40-minute frequency on the portion of the route shared with 2B and on an 80-minute frequency on the outer portion of the route. The route would operate between downtown Brunswick and the commercial/employment areas south of downtown Brunswick, along Altama Avenue, Cypress Mill Road, and US 341 to I-95.

Route 2B – Downtown/I-95-Golden Isles Parkway (GIP)

Service would be provided primarily for employment trips on weekdays during early morning and afternoon periods. Service would be linked to key employer shift times and would be provided on a 40-minute frequency on the portion of the route shared with Route 2A and on an 80-minute frequency on the outer portion of the route. The route would operate between downtown Brunswick and the commercial/employment areas south of downtown, along Altama Avenue, and Golden Isles Parkway to I-95.

Route 3 – Downtown/St. Simons Island

Route 3 would provide weekday service during the midday period between downtown Brunswick and St. Simons Island. Service would operate every 60 minutes and provide access between St. Simons Island and the mainland for various trip purposes. A loop operation on St. Simons Island would provide service to the Village, East Beach, Airport, and Sea Island/Frederica Road Areas.

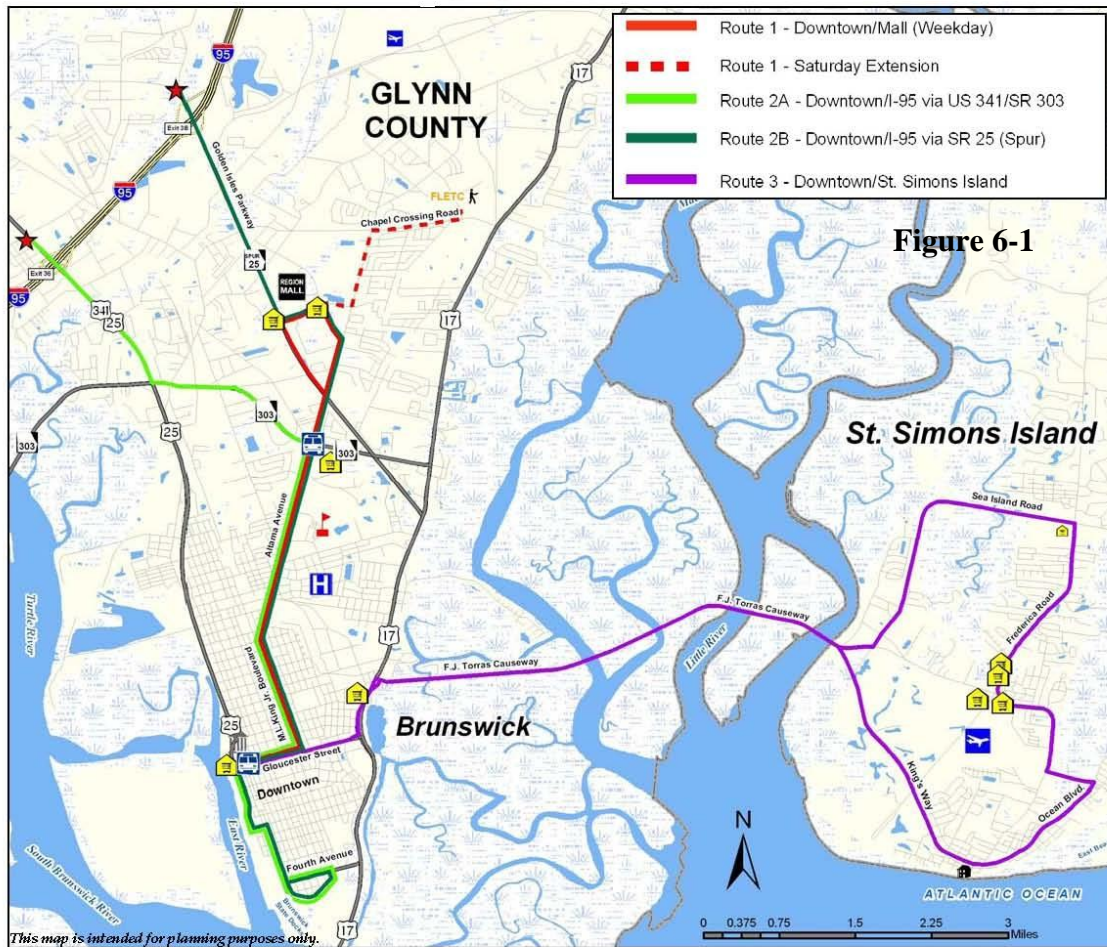


Figure 6-1

Table 6-1 Proposed Service Operating Characteristics

Route Number	Name	Service Days	Service Hours	Round-trip Distance (miles)	Buses	Service Frequency (minutes)	Est. Annual Op. Costs
1	Downtown-Mall	MON - FRI SAT	8 am-4 pm 8 am-6 pm	12 16	2 2	30 40	\$253,000
2a	Downtown-I-95/ US 341	MON - FRI	6 am-8 am 4 pm-6 pm	20	1	40*/80	\$51,000
2b	Downtown-I-95/ Golden Isle Parkway	MON - FRI	6 am-8 am 4 pm-6 pm	20	1	40*/80	\$51,000
3	Downtown-St. Simons Island	MON - FRI	9 am-3 pm	22	1	60	\$76,000
--	ADA/ Paratransit**	MON - FRI SAT	8 am-4 pm 8 am-6 pm	--	1	--	\$127,000
TOTAL							\$558,000

*The 40 minute frequency occurs along the common portion of routes 2a and 2b.

** Complementary ADA paratransit service directly provided for Route 1, and through route deviation for routes 2a, 2b, and 3.

Table 6-1
Recommended Fixed Route Service Operating Characteristics

Route Number	Name	Service Days	Service Hours	Round-trip Distance (miles)	Buses	Service Frequency (minutes)	Est. Annual Op. Costs
1	Downtown/Altama Connector	MON-FRI SAT	8am – 4pm 8am – 6pm	12 16	2 2	30 40	\$202,000 \$51,000
2a	Downtown/I-95-US 341	MON-FRI	6am – 8am 4pm – 6pm	20	1	40*/80	\$51,000
2B	Downtown/I-95 Golden Isle Pkwy	MON-FRI	6am – 8am 4pm – 6pm	20	1	40*/80	\$51,000
3	Downtown/St. Simons Island	MON-FRI	9am – 3pm	22	1	60	\$76,000
-	ADA/Paratransit**	MON-FRI SAT	8am – 4pm 8am – 6pm	-	1	-	\$127,000
TOTAL							\$558,000

Source: Brunswick/Glynn Transit Needs and Opportunities Study

*The 40-minute frequency occurs along the common portion of Routes 2A and 2B

**Complementary ADA paratransit service directly provided for Route 1 and through route deviation for routes 2A, 2B, and 3

Table 6-2
Transit Service Implementation Plan

Implementation Year	Implementation Activities
Year 1 (2006)	Establish MPO transit advisory committee
	Hire or appoint initial transit staff position
	Initiate detailed service planning, including a public hearing, to formally establish routes, services, fares, costs, and funding
	Prepare Section 5307 urban transit service grant application for capital equipment and facilities
	Initiate equipment procurement process
Year 2 (2007)	Hire dedicated transit staff
	Receive capital equipment, install bus stops, shelters, and intercept point/hub improvements
	Initiate rideshare program
Year 3 (2008)	Initiate weekday revenue service on fixed routes 1 and 2 and ADA complementary paratransit service
	Review Service performance and modify as appropriate
Year 4 (2009)	Initiate weekday revenue service on Route 3 and Saturday service on Route 1
	Review feasibility for establishing a rural transit program
	If rural service is warranted, prepare/submit 5311 grant application
	Review urban system performance and modify as appropriate
Year 5 (2010)	Initiate procurement process and start up activities for rural transit program capital equipment
	Review urban system performance and modify as appropriate

Source: Brunswick/Glynn Transit Needs and Opportunities Study

Table 6-3
Recommended Transit Service Financial Plan
Annual Operating Costs and Revenues

Year	Program Elements	Operating Cost*	Fare Revenue*	Total Subsidy*	Federal Share*	State Share*	Local Share*
1	Service Planning; Administration	\$130,000	-	\$130,000	\$86,000	\$7,000	\$37,000
2	Administration; Rideshare	\$100,000	-	\$100,000	\$50,000	-	\$50,000
3	Administration; Rideshare; Initiate Services	\$505,000	\$46,359	\$458,641	\$229,321	-	\$229,321
4	Administration; Rideshare; Continue & Expand Services	\$658,000	\$103,986	\$554,020	\$277,010	-	\$277,010
5	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$658,000	\$103,986	\$554,020	\$277,010	-	\$277,010
6	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$671,160	\$106,066	\$565,080	\$282,540	-	\$282,540
7	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$684,583	\$108,187	\$576,382	\$288,191	-	\$288,191
8	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$698,275	\$110,351	\$587,910	\$293,995	-	\$293,995
9	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$712,240	\$112,558	\$599,668	\$299,834	-	\$299,834
10	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$726,485	\$114,809	\$611,660	\$305,830	-	\$305,830
11	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$741,015	\$117,105	\$623,894	\$311,947	-	\$311,947
12	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$755,835	\$119,447	\$636,372	\$318,186	-	\$318,186
13	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$770,952	\$121,836	\$650,000	\$325,000	-	\$325,000

Year	Program Elements	Operating Cost*	Fare Revenue*	Total Subsidy*	Federal Share*	State Share*	Local Share*
14	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$786,371	\$124,273	\$662,082	\$331,041	-	\$331,041
15	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$802,098	\$126,758	\$675,322	\$337,661	-	\$337,661
16	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$818,140	\$129,294	\$688,830	\$344,415	-	\$344,415
17	Administration; Rideshare; Continue- Services-	\$834,503	\$131,879	\$702,606	\$351,303	-	\$351,303
18	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$851,193	\$134,516	\$716,658	\$358,329	-	\$358,329
19	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$868,217	\$137,207	\$730,992	\$365,496	-	\$365,496
20	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$885,581	\$139,951	\$745,612	\$372,806	-	\$372,806
21	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$903,293	\$142,750	\$750,524	\$375,262	-	\$375,262
22	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$921,358	\$145,606	\$775,734	\$387,867	-	\$387,867
23	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$939,786	\$148,518	\$791,248	\$395,624	-	\$395,624
24	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$958,582	\$151,488	\$807,074	\$403,537	-	\$403,537
25	Administration; Rideshare; Continue Services	\$977,753	\$154,518	\$823,214	\$411,607	-	\$411,607

Source: Brunswick/Glynn Transit Needs and Opportunities Study

*Assume 2% inflation beginning in Year 6

Table 6-4
Estimated Capital Program

Year	Description	Cost*	Federal Share	State Share	Local Share
1	Computer, office equipment	\$60,000	\$48,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
2	4 buses, 2 vans, signage, equipment, and facility improvements	\$815,000	\$652,000	\$81,500	\$81,500
3	-	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-	-
6	-	-	-	-	-
7	-	-	-	-	-
8	-	-	-	-	-
9	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	-	-
11	-	-	-	-	-
12	4 buses, 2 vans, signage, equipment, and facility improvements	\$993,480	\$794,784	\$99,348	\$99,348
13	-	-	-	-	-
14	-	-	-	-	-
15	-	-	-	-	-
16	-	-	-	-	-
17	-	-	-	-	-
18	-	-	-	-	-
19	-	-	-	-	-
20	-	-	-	-	-
21	-	-	-	-	-
22	4 buses, 2 vans, signage, equipment, and facility improvements	\$1,211,048	\$968,838	\$121,105	\$121,105
23	-	-	-	-	-
24	-	-	-	-	-
25	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Brunswick/Glynn Transit Needs and Opportunities Study

*Assume 2% inflation and 10-year vehicle replacement schedule

Section 6.5 Future Directions

The BATS staff will work with the FTA, Georgia Department of Transportation, GDHR, and the local non-profit service providers to monitor the needs of the transit dependent Glynn County. In addition to supporting existing transportation services, the recommendations from the Brunswick/Glynn Transit Needs and Opportunities Study will be implemented according to the implementation schedule outlined in this section. The connectivity between the BATS transit system and the pedestrian and bicycle network will be closely monitored to ensure that a safe and

efficient multimodal network accessible to all residents is established. All buses serving the BATS area should be equipped to carry bicycles to ensure multimodal connectivity.