

-----PRESS RELEASE-----

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For More Information Contact:
Corey Hull, MPO Coordinator; 229-333-5277

Public Transit Back on Track for 2012

The Valdosta-Lowndes Transit Steering Committee will continue the development of a fixed-route public transit system for the Valdosta Urbanized Area, despite recent funding delays, agreeing that the overdue transit system will bring ridership opportunities to Valdosta citizens that will benefit the entire community. Through the Valdosta-Lowndes Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the steering committee is refocusing its planning efforts on phasing the implementation of the public transit system by fiscal year 2012.

In early 2009, the MPO began a series of public meetings to gather input and to develop the service plan and service delivery strategy. Over 500 people attended the public and civic group meetings providing valuable input about what public transit should look like in the Valdosta Urbanized Area. This feedback resulted in plans for a five-route transit system with comparable paratransit for ADA requirements which focus on key ridership generators like Valdosta State University, South Georgia Medical Center, Valdosta Mall and Valdosta Technical College.

The proposed service plan outlines the preferred routing options, details the routes and stops along the routes, provides budgets and timetables, and outlines how local governments may work together to implement transit service in our area. The Transit Steering Committee—in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Transportation, Grice and Associates, and TranSystems—will work to develop a phased implementation of the plan. This process will include more public outreach and involvement opportunities in the coming year to better develop each route to suit the needs of the community. This phased implementation will also give local governments an opportunity to set-aside funding for capital and operating expenses in their future budgets.

“The Transit Steering Committee hopes to have the first phase proposal for transit implementation as early as December 2009,” said MPO Coordinator Corey Hull. “Other routes may be added after careful consideration of funding availability and the potential to maximize service to the entire community.”

For more information on the Transit Implementation Plan, please contact MPO Coordinator Corey Hull at transit@sgrc.us or 229-333-5277. The proposed service plan and service delivery options have been posted to the MPO website at www.sgrc.us/transportation.

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