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HENRY JOINT COUNTY/CITIES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

May 2016

RESOLUTION NO. ~~16-~~ 147

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE JOINT HENRY COUNTY/CITIES COMPREHENSIVE
TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CTP) UPDATE

WHEREAS, on August 6, 2007, the Henry County Board of Commissioners (BOC) approved a Joint Henry County/Cities Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP); and

WHEREAS, the BOC wished to update the CTP to cover a planning period from 2015 - 2040; and

WHEREAS, on February 17, 2015, Jacobs Engineering was contracted to complete the CTP update for an amount not to exceed \$625,000; and

WHEREAS, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) was contracted to compensate Henry County for the cost of the project in an amount not to exceed \$500,000; and;

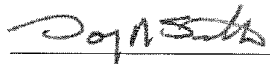
WHEREAS, each of Henry County's four cities was contracted to compensate Henry County for an amount relative to each city's respective population; and

WHEREAS, the update has been completed in compliance with standards established by ARC and to the satisfaction of the people of Henry County and the BOC;


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Henry County Board of Commissioners approves the final draft of the Joint Henry County/Cities Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) Update dated May 12, 2016, as provided by Jacobs Engineering.

BE IT SO RESOLVED THIS 7TH DAY OF JUNE 2016.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF HENRY COUNTY, GEORGIA


Tommy N. Smith, Chairman

ATTEST:


Stephanie Braun, County Clerk



County Commissioners

Tommy N. Smith, Chair

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Patrick Kelly, Henry County Water Authority
Ruth Kelly, Transit Rider
Kaycee Mertz, Georgia Department of Transportation Office of Planning
Charlie Moseley, Henry Development Authority
Elsie Ponder, Senior Center
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Introduction

In 2005 the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) initiated the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) program to encourage counties and their municipalities to develop long-range transportation plans. ARC allocates federal funding to all counties in its transportation planning jurisdiction on a five to seven year update cycle. The intent of the program is to help counties and municipalities create a local transportation vision that complements local comprehensive plans. This planning effort creates a framework for project and program implementation at both the local and regional levels. The Henry County/Cities Joint Comprehensive Transportation Plan (JCTP) is important because it directs funding decisions locally for the next five years and beyond. In addition, ARC uses CTPs as the foundation of the wider regional vision for transportation. Transportation projects identified by this planning process are eligible for inclusion in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and may be considered for federal funding.

Project Overview

This JCTP Update assesses current and projected transportation needs through the year 2040 and involves Henry County and the cities of Hampton, Locust Grove, McDonough, and Stockbridge. The study area extends five miles beyond the Henry County border including portions of Butts, Clayton, DeKalb, Newton, Rockdale, and Spalding Counties (**Figure 2**). Transportation plans funded through ARC's CTP program follow a four-step technical documentation process as depicted in **Figure 1** and described below.

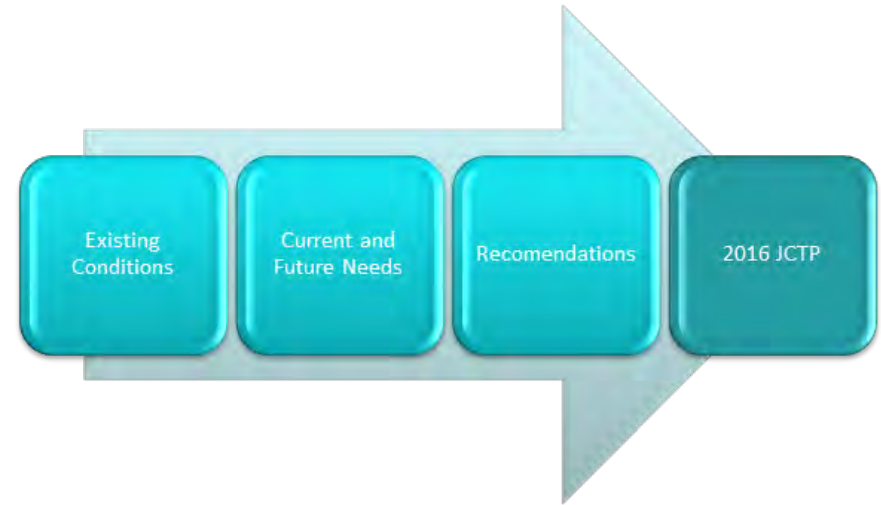
Inventory of Existing Conditions

The first step was the Inventory of Existing Conditions, which established the baseline conditions for 2015. This inventory of the transportation network in and around Henry County included factors that influence transportation such as demographics, employment, land use, and development. The conditions examined were specifically geared toward the transportation system in Henry County, but went beyond the condition of roads and bridges to the factors that influence travel demand. Existing conditions are summarized in this document and presented in greater detail in the full *Inventory of Existing Conditions* technical memo, available on www.henryinmotion.com.

Needs Assessment

The second step was an assessment of transportation needs both today and through the year 2040. Needs were identified using travel demand modeling, GIS analyses, and input from the community and stakeholders.

Figure 1 : CTP Technical Documentation Process



This report provided an assessment of the ability of the Henry County transportation network to meet community transportation needs now and in the future. Future needs were determined based on the existence, capacity, condition, and effectiveness of existing infrastructure and services to meet forecast demands, accommodate future growth, and protect community resources. The analysis addressed the need to improve or utilize transportation facilities during the planning period in a way that will preserve the existing system, provide a safe and efficient transportation network, and enhance mobility and accessibility. Needs identified in this assessment are summarized in this document and presented in greater detail in the *Assessment of Current and Future Needs*, available on www.henryinmotion.com.

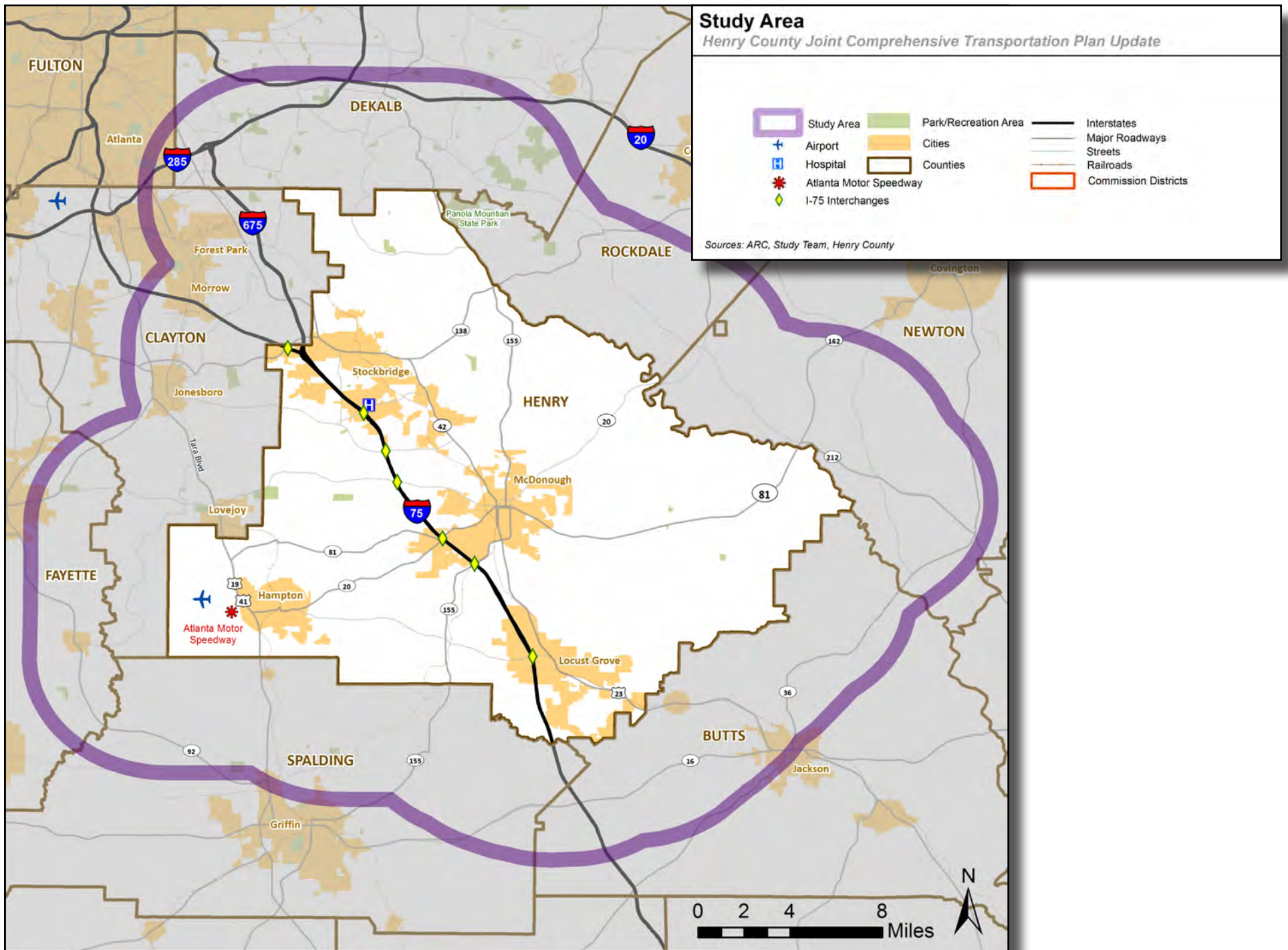
Recommendations

The third step was the development of policy and project recommendations designed to address the issues identified in step two. The information gathered in the Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment phases, including input from public outreach, informed the recommendations resulting from this plan. In addition to recommended projects, there are policy and funding recommendations.

Final Documentation

The fourth and final step in the process is this final plan document, the Henry County JCTP, which synthesizes the information from steps one through three and includes a financially constrained five-year action plan and a prioritized but financially unconstrained set of projects through 2040.

Figure 2: Study Area Map



JCTP Update Goals

This section presents the proposed goals for the JCTP Update. These new goals have been reviewed by the Project Management Team, Stakeholder Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and the general Henry County public. The goals and objectives of this Update provided the foundation for the development of performance measures used in the evaluation of needs and prioritization of projects.

The basis for the goals presented here are the goals identified in the original 2007 Henry JCTP. They were used as a starting place and cross referenced with transportation goals as set forth in the federal transportation legislation that governs how the Highway Trust Fund is administered.

After this analysis it was determined that the 2007 JCTP goals did not fully incorporate the national goals or fully incorporate the concepts of the Regional Policy Framework to “Winning the Future” as set forth in the Atlanta Region’s Plan. The goals and objectives of this CTP update are consistent with the intent of the regional framework.. While it is not necessary to match the federal transportation goals, it bears noting that federal highway and transit funds will be allocated based on those goals. After extensive discussion with the Project Management Team, Stakeholder Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and the public it was determined that the goals and objectives of the JCTP Update should be modified to better fit with countywide vision.

Issues Addressed by the New Goals

The goals were revised to incorporate accessibility and mobility, active transportation, and other considerations.

Accessibility and Mobility

The terms accessibility and mobility are interrelated and easily confused. The following are the definitions of these terms as they relate to this study¹.

Mobility means the movement of people and goods from one place to another. Thinking of transportation in terms of mobility prioritizes an increase in miles traveled or travel speed. Transportation problems are defined in terms of constraints on physical movement and favor solutions based on increased speed and capacity.

Accessibility is the ability to reach desired goods, services, activities, and destinations (in a word, opportunities). Access is the real goal of nearly all forms of transportation. Mobility is an important part of accessibility but not the only part. Thinking in terms of accessibility means that all access options are potentially important: mobility, land use (bringing destinations closer together), or mobility substitutes (teleworking, delivery services, etc.).

Accessibility is the broadest option in terms of problem definition, solutions and funding opportunities. Take the example of a rural household. For such a household, mobility will almost always be an important transportation consideration because the rural household is farther from desired opportunities like work and shopping. Mobility emphasizes higher travel speeds and more capacity on roads, making longer trips faster and easier. However, when thinking in terms of accessibility, options like developing community crossroads, teleworking, and mobile services can be considered as alternatives to more traditional travel patterns.

Mobility is a vitally important goal to Henry County because of its suburban and rural nature with many jobs being located outside the county. However, planning in terms of accessibility emphasizes livability. As growth continues in the County and areas densify, actively managing accessibility will contribute to successful growth and development that does not overly congest the transportation network.

Active Transportation

Healthy Henry – An important aspect of the transportation network that has traditionally received less attention during planning is the area of health. Obesity is a rapidly growing concern with drastic negative health impacts. The consequences of obesity can be severe, and include increased rates of mortality, high blood pressure diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

The built environment can have an impact on obesity especially among children. Being physically active is one part of staying healthy. However, often the way we have built our communities has led to barriers to being active. Separating land uses has led to long distances between destinations making walking, biking, and other modes of active transportation impractical. Even shorter trips that may be conducive to active transportation have been made unattractive due to lack of adequate non-motorized facilities. Often roads have been built only to accommodate automobiles leaving the use of other modes uncomfortable, unsafe, or both. Providing safe and appealing ways to use active transportation to access destinations such as schools, parks, and community services will help facilitate a healthy community.

Table 1: JCTP Update Goals and Objectives

Goal		Objective	
1	Enhance Mobility for People and Goods in Henry County and Its Cities.	1.1	Minimize congestion on the road network
		1.2	Provide the most cost effective improvements in transportation system performance
2	Enhance Accessibility for People and Goods in Henry County and its Cities.	2.1	Enhance the connectivity of key County activity centers
		2.2	Better manage road access to adjacent land uses
3	Reinforce Growth Patterns that Meet County and City Visions.	3.1	Preserve the County's rural areas
		3.2	Provide transportation investments that reinforce the land use plans and development visions of the County and its Cities
		3.3	Promote development that is fiscally sustainable (that is, that uses existing infrastructure or that helps pay for new infrastructure)
		3.4	Preserve and enhance the character of the historic and existing communities
4	Protect and Enhance the County's and Cities' Environmental Quality.	4.1	Minimize air quality impacts of transportation investment
		4.2	Preserve the County's natural and environmentally sensitive areas
5	Ensure Coordination among the Planning and Development Activities of the County, its Cities, the School District, the Water and Sewerage Authority, and other involved organizations.	5.1	Convene an inter-departmental planning work session to meet at regular intervals (quarterly, semi-annually, etc.) to coordinate future planning and development activities
6	Achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.	6.1	Achieve a fatality rate below the regional average
		6.2	Achieve fatality rates of less than 1 per 100 million VMT
		6.3	Achieve crash rates below 300 per 100 million VMT
		6.4	Prioritize 50 percent of safety improvements at the 10 most dangerous and frequent crash locations
7	Maintain transportation infrastructure in a state of good repair.	7.1	Achieve a PACES rating of 70 or above on 85 percent of county and city centerline road miles
		7.2	Prioritize bridge maintenance to prolong structural integrity
		7.3	Prioritize local funding to match at least 100 percent of state maintenance grants
		7.4	Coordinate road maintenance with storm water and drainage maintenance, planned roadway improvements, and new developments
8	Maintain transportation spending at appropriate levels to fund needed system expansion and maintenance.	8.1	Allocate at least 75 percent of SPLOST projects to transportation purposes
		8.2	Leverage federal funding to maximize impact of local dollars
		8.3	Track eligibility of projects for emerging funding sources
9	Enhance citizens health and quality of life through transportation improvements.	9.1	Increase access to parks and schools via active transportation infrastructure
		9.2	Provide comfortable, safe, and convenient options to walk to nearby destinations
		9.3	Provide access and connections to regional trails
		9.4	Prioritize at least 50% of bicycle and pedestrian improvements in appropriate areas with high demand corresponding to active transportation focus areas identified in the needs assessment process
10	Improve county truck routes, provide access to freight land use, and support economic development.	10.1	Fund improvements for trucks on national, state, regionally, and locally identified freight routes
		10.2	Prioritize investments in the top 10 corridors or areas with heavy truck movements

Community Engagement

The involvement of Henry County citizens was vital to creating a transportation plan that reflects the vision and desires of the community. The process and strategies used to engage the public are described below.

Project Management Team

A project management team (PMT) guided the process and provided regular feedback and instruction to the consultant team. The PMT was made up of representatives from Henry County government, the cities, and the Atlanta Regional Commission. The primary contact for the PMT was the county project manager, Stacey Jordan-Rudeseal.

The PMT met monthly at the Henry County administrative building to receive progress updates, provide input and feedback, and give direction to the consultant team. Meeting dates are listed below:

- April 15, 2015
- May 13, 2015
- June 10, 2015
- July 15, 2015
- August 10, 2015 (joint meeting with Technical Advisory Committee)
- September 16, 2015
- October 14, 2015
- November 19, 2015 (joint meeting with Technical Advisory Committee)

Technical Advisory Committee

With help from the PMT, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was created. The TAC was made up of professionals in the field of transportation and other areas that influence transportation such as the school board, water and sewer authority, and law enforcement. Transportation officials from the counties surrounding Henry were also invited to participate in the TAC.

The purpose of the TAC was to provide technical feedback on the issues identified during the planning process. Initial results from Inventory of Existing Conditions and the Needs Assessment were presented for confirmation and feedback at the TAC meetings #1 and #2 respectively.

TAC meetings were held on the following dates:

- August 10, 2015 (joint meeting with PMT)
- November 19, 2015 (joint meeting with PMT)

Stakeholder Committee

With help from the PMT, community members from representative groups throughout the county were identified for a Stakeholder Committee (SC). Full geographic representation was considered and all of the cities and county commission districts were asked for appointees. Modal representation was also important and transit riders, the bicycle community, and running community were all invited to participate. Also, full demographic representation was considered and representatives from minority, environmental justice, aging, and youth communities were all invited to participate. Finally, the business and development community was invited to participate.

The purpose of the SC was to provide community based feedback on the issues identified during the planning process. Initial results from Inventory of Existing Conditions and the Needs Assessment were presented for confirmation and feedback at the SC meetings #1 and #2 respectively.

SC meetings were held on the following dates:

- August 11, 2015
- November 19, 2015

Website – henryinmotion.com

Internet presence is a major component of community engagement, data gathering, and information sharing. A project website was created that existed for the duration of the planning process. The website, www.henryinmotion.com, will also be available for Henry County to maintain into the future to continue sharing information and updates to the plan. An innovative aspect of the website is a mapping feature that allows people to submit comments about specific geographic locations in the county.

Survey

A 12 question survey was created and made available for two months between September 21, 2015 and November 20, 2015. The purpose of the survey was vision and goal development as well as gauging public interest in different aspects of the transportation network and its concept of the biggest transportation challenges facing the county. The survey was made available online and in hard copy, and promoted on the County and cities government websites and Facebook pages. A press release and news article in the Henry Herald also promoted the survey. Finally, the survey was promoted at the list of community events later in this section. A total of 286 surveys were completed.

Public Meetings/Open Houses

A public meeting was held on November 12, 2015 at the Henry County administrative building at 140 Henry Parkway in McDonough. During the meeting initial analysis from the Needs Assessment was presented in open house format to the public. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Henry County Zoning Advisory Board meeting with the goal of capturing citizens attending that meeting. Thirty-two residents signed-in to the meeting with many more attending.

A second public meeting was held on March 24, 2016 also at the Henry County administrative building and was conducted in an open house format. More than 40 attended. The open house was an opportunity to review data from the transportation needs assessment and give input on the initial set of projects being recommended.

Pertinent project materials were provided at the meetings, including fact sheets, project website cards, comment cards, and signups for project mailing lists. Display boards illustrated specific project information about the County's transportation network, demographics, and initial recommended project locations.

Advertising for the public meetings included a variety of techniques such as media posted by the County's Communication office, flyer distribution by hand, e-mail and direct mailings. Additionally, coordination with the County's municipalities included distribution of the advertising through their respective mediums. To also comply with Title VI requirements, meeting notifications were targeted to specific groups within the County where appropriate.

To further awareness about the process, a panel discussion was produced and shown on the County's cable access channel. The content of the discussion included an overview of the comprehensive transportation plan, how analysis was conducted and the importance of public outreach.

Community Events

Getting out in the community is just as important as having an online presence, or other types of advertisement. It is a great way to bring the conversation to citizens. With this in mind, the consultant team identified six opportunities to attend community events, bring awareness to the process and encourage completion of the surveys. They were held:

- October 5 – City of Hampton Utility Payment Office (Survey Intercept) – 27 surveys completed and more than 70 persons engaged
- October 9 – Columbus Day Super Sale at Tanger Outlet (Survey Distribution) – Approximately 70 surveys were distributed

- October 20 – Stockbridge Business Association (Presentation) – A total of 35 persons attended
- October 24 – Annual Ale Festival in McDonough – 25 surveys completed and more than 50 persons engaged
- October 30 – Trunk or Treat Locust Grove City Hall – Surveys and November 12 meeting announcements distributed to attendees
- November 14 – Simply Southern Jubilee in Hampton – Surveys distributed to 67 attendees

Transit Outreach

The CTP process includes an element for consideration of additional transit service in the County. The public was given the opportunity to provide feedback through questions included in the survey, a transit workshop hosted by County Commissioner Bruce Holmes and a telephone survey. The transit workshop was held on January 30, 2016 and 54 residents attended. The content included an overview of existing transit service in the County, a discussion about a process for adding additional service and an interactive session with attendees that allowed for input.

A statistically valid telephone/email survey was also conducted in conjunction with the transit analysis with 578 respondents. The statistically valid survey revealed a strong, but not overwhelming, desire for additional transit. According to the 93% of Henry County residents currently drive alone to get to and from work and other frequent destinations. Seven percent use Xpress service to get to work. More than two-thirds (69%) of residents surveyed indicated they are willing to use public transit. Of the 31% who are not willing to use public transit, the main reasons given were convenience, safety, and scheduling.



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